To face the Title. FRONTISPIECE.

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# THE OLD

# ENGLISH BARON:

A

# GOTHIC STORY.

A NEW EDITION.

*LONDON:*
Printed for CHARLES DILLY, in the *Poultry*.
MDCCLXXXVII.

BRITISH
30 JUN 60

# TO

# Mrs. BRIDGEN.

MADAM,

THIS new Edition of the English Baron begs permission to acknowledge your patronage and protection, of which it has long since felt the advantages.

You cast an eye of favour upon his first appearance, under all the disadvantages of an incorrect and very faulty impression; You took him out of this degrading dress, and encouraged him to assume a graceful and ornamental habit.

You did still more for him—You took upon yourself the trouble to revise and correct the errors of the first impression; and, in short, you gave

 him

him all the graces necessary to solicit and obtain the notice and approbation of the Public.

The Author cannot fully enjoy her success, without acknowledging from whence she in a great measure derives it.

You, Madam, as becomes the daughter of Richardson, are more solicitous to deserve the acknowledgments of a grateful heart, than to receive them.—You have no reason to suspect me of flattery, but of vanity, you may, in wishing to mention your name thus publicly as the patroness and friend of,

MADAM,

Your most obliged humble Servant,

Sept. 1, 1780. CLARA REEVE.

# PREFACE.

AS this Story is of a species which, though not new, is out of the common track, it has been thought necessary to point out some circumstances to the Reader, which will elucidate the design, and, it is hoped, will induce him to form a favourable, as well as a right judgment of the work before him.

This Story is the literary offspring of the Castle of Otranto, written upon the same plan, with a design to unite the most attractive and interesting circumstances of the ancient Romance and modern Novel, at the same time it assumes a character and manner of its own, that differs from both; it is distinguished by the appellation of a Gothic Story, being a picture of Gothic

times and manners. Fictitious Stories have been the delight of all times and all countries, by oral tradition in barbarous, by writing in more civilized ones; and although ſome perſons of wit and learning have condemned them indiſcriminately, I would venture to affirm, that even thoſe who ſo much affect to deſpiſe them under one form, will receive and embrace them under another.

Thus, for inſtance, a man ſhall admire and almoſt adore the Epic poems of the Ancients, and yet deſpiſe and execrate the ancient Romances, which are only Epics in proſe.

Hiſtory repreſents human nature as it is in real life;—alas, too often a melancholy retroſpect!—Romance diſplays only the amiable ſide of the picture: it ſhews the pleaſing features, and throws a veil over the blemiſhes: Mankind are naturally pleaſed with what gratifies their vanity; and vanity,

like

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like all other paſſions of the human heart, may be rendered ſubſervient to good and uſeful purpoſes.

I confeſs that it may be abuſed, and become an inſtrument to corrupt the manners and morals of mankind; ſo may poetry, ſo may plays, ſo may every kind of compoſition; but that will prove nothing more than the old ſaying lately revived by the philoſophers the moſt in faſhion, "that every earthly "thing has two handles."

The buſineſs of Romance is, firſt, to excite the attention; and ſecondly, to direct it to ſome uſeful, or at leaſt innocent, end: Happy the writer who attains both theſe points, like Richardſon! and not unfortunate, or undeſerving praiſe, he who gains only the latter, and furniſhes out an entertainment for the reader!

Having, in ſome degree, opened my deſign, I beg leave to conduct my reader back again, till he comes within

view of the Castle of Otranto; a work which, as already has been observed, is an attempt to unite the various merits and graces of the ancient Romance and modern Novel. To attain this end, there is required a sufficient degree of the marvellous, to excite the attention; enough of the manners of real life, to give an air of probability to the work; and enough of the pathetic, to engage the heart in its behalf.

The book we have mentioned is excellent in the two last points, but has a redundancy in the first; the opening excites the attention very strongly; the conduct of the story is artful and judicious; the characters are admirably drawn and supported; the diction polished and elegant; yet, with all these brilliant advantages, it palls upon the mind (though it does not upon the ear); and the reason is obvious, the

machinery is ſo violent, that it deſtroys the effect it is intended to excite. Had the ſtory been kept within the utmoſt *verge* of probability, the effect had been preſerved, without loſing the leaſt circumſtance that excites or detains the attention.

For inſtance; we can conceive, and allow of, the appearance of a ghoſt; we can even diſpenſe with an enchanted ſword and helmet; but then they muſt keep within certain limits of credibility: A ſword ſo large as to require an hundred men to lift it; a helmet that by its own weight forces a paſſage through a court-yard into an arched vault, big enough for a man to go through; a picture that walks out of its frame; a ſkeleton ghoſt in a hermit's cowl;—When your expectation is wound up to the higheſt pitch, theſe circumſtances take it down with a witneſs, deſtroy the work of imagina-

tion, and, inſtead of attention, excite laughter. I was both ſurpriſed and vexed to find the enchantment diſſolved, which I wiſhed might continue to the end of the book; and ſeveral of its readers have confeſſed the ſame diſappointment to me: The beauties are ſo numerous, that we cannot bear the defects, but want it to be perfect in all reſpects.

In the courſe of my obſervations upon this ſingular book, it ſeemed to me that it was poſſible to compoſe a work upon the ſame plan, wherein theſe defects might be avoided; and the *keeping*, as in *painting*, might be preſerved.

But then I began to fear it might happen to me as to certain tranſlators, and imitators of Shakeſpeare; the unities may be preſerved, while the ſpirit is evaporated. However, I ventured to attempt it; I read the begin-

ning to a circle of friends of approved judgment, and by their approbation was encouraged to proceed, and to finiſh it.

By the advice of the ſame friends I printed the firſt Edition in the country, where it circulated chiefly, very few copies being ſent to London; and being thus encouraged, I have determined to offer a ſecond Edition to that Public which has ſo often rewarded the efforts of thoſe, who have endeavoured to contribute to its entertainment.

The work has lately undergone a reviſion and correction, the former Edition being very incorrect; and by the earneſt ſolicitation of ſeveral friends, for whoſe judgment I have the greateſt deference, I have conſented to a change of the title from the *Champion of Virtue* to the *Old Engliſh Baron*:—as that character is thought to be the principal one in the ſtory.

ture to a circle of friends of approved judgment, and by their approbation was encouraged to proceed, and to finish it.

By the advice of the same friends I printed the first Edition in the country, where it circulated chiefly, very few copies being sent to London; and being thus encouraged, I have determined to offer a second Edition to that Public, which has so often rewarded the efforts of those who have endeavoured to contribute to its amusement.

The work has lately undergone a revision and correction, the former Edition being very incorrect; and by the earnest solicitation of several friends, for whose judgment I have the greatest deference, I have consented to a change of the title from the *Champion of Virtue* to the *Old English Baron*:—as that character is thought to be the principal one in the story.

# THE

# OLD ENGLISH BARON:

## A

# GOTHIC STORY.

IN the minority of Henry the Sixth, King of England, when the renowned John, Duke of Bedford, was Regent of France, and Humphrey, the good Duke of Gloucester, was Protector of England, a worthy Knight, called Sir Philip Harclay, returned from his travels to England, his native country. He had served under the glorious King Henry the Fifth with distinguished valour, had acquired an honourable fame, and was no less esteemed for Christian virtues than for deeds of chivalry. After the death of his Prince, he entered into the service of the Greek emperor, and distinguished his courage against the encroach-

ments

ments of the Saracens. In a battle there, he took prisoner a certain Gentleman, by name M. Zadisky, of Greek extraction, but brought up by a Saracen Officer; this man he converted to the Christian faith; after which he bound him to himself by the ties of friendship and gratitude, and he resolved to continue with his Benefactor. After thirty years travel and warlike service, he determined to return to his native land, and to spend the remainder of his life in peace; and, by devoting himself to works of piety and charity, prepare for a better state hereafter.

This noble Knight had, in his early youth, contracted a strict friendship with the only son of the Lord Lovel; a gentleman of eminent virtues and accomplishments. During Sir Philip's residence in foreign countries, he had frequently written to his friend, and had for a time received answers; the last informed him of the death of old Lord Lovel, and the marriage of the young one; but from that time he had heard no more from him. Sir Philip imputed it not to neglect or forgetfulness, but to the difficulties of intercourse, common at that time to all travellers and adventurers.

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adventurers. When he was returning home, he resolved, after looking into his family affairs, to visit the castle of Lovel, and inquire into the situation of his friend. He landed in Kent, attended by his Greek friend and two faithful servants, one of which was maimed by the wounds he had received in the defence of his Master.

Sir Philip went to his family-seat in Yorkshire; he found his mother and sister were dead, and his estates sequestered in the hands of Commissioners appointed by the Protector. He was obliged to prove the reality of his claim, and the identity of his person (by the testimony of some of the old servants of his family) after which every thing was restored to him. He took possession of his own house, established his household, settled the old servants in their former stations, and placed those he brought home in the upper offices of his family. He then left his friend to superintend his domestic affairs; and, attended by only one of his old servants, he set out for the castle of Lovel, in the west of England. They travelled by easy journeys; but, towards the evening of the second day, the servant

vant was so ill and fatigued he could go no further; he stopped at an inn where he grew worse every hour, and the next day expired. Sir Philip was under great concern for the loss of his servant, and some for himself, being alone in a strange place; however, he took courage, ordered his servant's funeral, attended it himself, and, having shed a tear of humanity over his grave, proceeded alone on his journey.

As he drew near the estate of his friend, he began to inquire of every one he met, whether the Lord Lovel resided at the seat of his ancestors? He was answered by one, he did not know;—by another, he could not tell;—by a third, that he never heard of such a person. Sir Philip thought it strange that a man of Lord Lovel's consequence should be unknown in his own neighbourhood, and where his ancestors had usually resided. He ruminated on the uncertainty of human happiness; "This world, said he, has nothing for a wise man to depend upon. I have lost all my relations, and most of my friends; and am even uncertain whether any are remaining: I will, however, be thankful for the

blessings

blessings that are spared to me; and I will endeavour to replace those that I have lost. If my friend lives, he shall share my fortune with me; his children shall have the reversion of it; and I will share his comforts in return. But perhaps my friend may have met with troubles that have made him disgusted with the world: Perhaps he has buried his amiable wife, or his promising children; and, tired of public life, he is retired into a monastery. At least, I will know what all this silence means."

When he came within a mile of the castle of Lovel, he stopped at a cottage, and asked for a draught of water: A Peasant, master of the house, brought it, and asked if his Honour would alight and take a moment's refreshment. Sir Philip accepted his offer, being resolved to make farther inquiry before he approached the Castle. He asked the same questions of him, that he had before of others. —Which Lord Lovel, said the man, does your Honour inquire after?—The man whom I knew was called Arthur, said Sir Philip.—Ay, said the Peasant, he was the only surviving son of Richard, Lord Lovel, as

I think.

I think.—Very true friend, he was so.—Alas, Sir, said the man, he is dead! he survived his father but a short time.—Dead! say you? how long since?—About fifteen years, to the best of my remembrance.—Sir Philip sighed deeply—Alas, said he, what do we, by living long, but survive all our friends! But pray tell me how he died?—I will, Sir, to the best of my knowledge. An't please your Honour, I heard say, that he attended the King when he went against the Welsh Rebels, and he left his Lady big with child; and so there was a battle fought, and the King got the better of the Rebels: There came first a report that none of the Officers were killed; but a few days after there came a messenger with an account very different, that several were wounded, and that the Lord Lovel was slain; which sad news overset us all with sorrow, for he was a noble Gentleman, a bountiful Master, and the delight of all the neighbourhood.—He was indeed, said Sir Philip, all that is amiable and good; he was my dear and noble friend, and I am inconsolable for his loss: But the unfortunate Lady, what became of her?—Why, an't please

pleaſe your Honour, they ſaid ſhe died of grief for the loſs of her huſband; but her death was kept private for a time, and we did not know it for certain till ſome weeks afterwards.—The will of Heaven be obeyed! ſaid Sir Philip; but who ſucceeded to the title and eſtate? The next heir, ſaid the Peaſant, a kinſman of the deceaſed, Sir Walter Lovel by name.—I have ſeen him, ſaid Sir Philip, formerly; but where was he when theſe events happened?—At the caſtle of Lovel, Sir; he came there on a viſit to the Lady, and waited there to receive my Lord, at his return from Wales. When the news of his death arrived, Sir Walter did every thing in his power to comfort her, and ſome ſaid he was to marry her; but ſhe refuſed to be comforted, and took it ſo to heart that ſhe died.—And does the preſent Lord Lovel reſide at the Caſtle? —No, Sir.—Who then?—The Lord Baron Fitz-Owen.—And how came Sir Walter to leave the ſeat of his anceſtors?—Why, Sir, he married his ſiſter to this ſaid Lord; and ſo he ſold the Caſtle to him, and went away, and built himſelf a houſe in the north country, as far as Northumberland, I think they call it.

—That

—That is very ſtrange! ſaid Sir Philip.—So it is, pleaſe your Honour; but this is all I know about it.—I thank you, friend, for your intelligence; I have taken a long journey to no purpoſe, and have met with nothing but croſs accidents. This life is, indeed, a pilgrimage! Pray direct me the neareſt way to the next Monaſtery.—Noble Sir, ſaid the Peaſant, it is full five miles off, the night is coming on, and the ways are bad; I am but a poor man, and cannot entertain your Honour as you are uſed to; but if you will enter my poor cottage, that, and every thing in it, are at your ſervice. My honeſt friend, I thank you heartily, ſaid Sir Philip; your kindneſs and hoſpitality might ſhame many of higher birth and breeding; I will accept your kind offer: But pray let me know the name of my hoſt?—John Wyatt, Sir; an honeſt man though a poor one, and a Chriſtian man though a ſinful one.—Whoſe cottage is this?—It belongs to the Lord Fitz-Owen.—What family have you?—A wife, two ſons and a daughter, who will all be proud to wait upon your Honour; let me hold your Honour's ſtirrup whilſt you alight. He ſeconded

these

these words by the proper action, and having assisted his guest to dismount, he conducted him into his house, called his wife to attend him, and then led his horse under a poor shed, that served him as a stable. Sir Philip was fatigued in body and mind, and was glad to repose himself any where. The courtesy of his host engaged his attention, and satisfied his wishes. He soon after returned, followed by a youth of about eighteen years;—Make haste, John, said the father, and be sure you say neither more nor less than what I have told you. I will, father, said the lad; and immediately set off, ran like a buck across the fields, and was out of sight in an instant.—I hope, friend, said Sir Philip, you have not sent your son to provide for my entertainment; I am a soldier, used to lodge and fare hard; and, if it were otherwise, your courtesy and kindness would give a relish to the most ordinary food.—I wish heartily, said Wyatt, it was in my power to entertain your Honour as you ought to be; but, as I cannot do so, I will, when my son returns, acquaint you with the errand I sent him on. After this they conversed together on common subjects, like

fellow-

fellow-creatures of the ſame natural form and endowments, though different kinds of education had given a conſcious ſuperiority to the one, a conſcious inferiority to the other; and the due reſpect was paid by the latter, without being exacted by the former. In about half an hour young John returned.—Thou haſt made haſte, ſaid the father.—Not more than good ſpeed, quoth the ſon.—Tell us, then, how you ſpeed?—Shall I tell all that paſſed? ſaid John.—All ſaid the father; I don't want to hide any thing. John ſtood with his cap in his hand, and thus told his tale.—I went ſtraight to the Caſtle as faſt as I could run; it was my hap to light on young maſter Edmund firſt, ſo I told him juſt as you bade me, that a noble Gentleman was come a long journey from foreign parts to ſee the Lord Lovel, his friend; and having lived abroad many years, he did not know that he was dead, and that the Caſtle was fallen into other hands; that upon hearing theſe tidings he was much grieved and diſappointed, and wanting a night's lodging, to reſt himſelf before he returned to his own home, he was fain to take up with one at

our

our cottage; that my father thought my Lord would be angry with him, if he were not told of the ſtranger's journey and intentions, eſpecially to let ſuch a man lie at our cottage, where he could neither be lodged nor entertained according to his quality. Here John ſtopped, and his father exclaimed —A good lad! you did your errand very well; and tell us the anſwer. John proceeded— Maſter Edmund ordered me ſome beer, and went to acquaint my Lord of the meſſage; he ſtayed a while, and then came back to me. —John, ſaid he, tell the noble ſtranger, that the Baron Fitz-Owen greets him well, and deſires him to reſt aſſured, that though Lord Lovel is dead, and the Caſtle fallen into other hands, his friends will always find a welcome there; and my Lord deſires that he will accept of a lodging there, while he remains in this country—ſo I came away directly, and made haſte to deliver my errand.

Sir Philip expreſſed ſome diſſatisfaction at this mark of old Wyatt's reſpect—I wiſh, ſaid he, that you had acquainted me with your intention before you ſent to inform the Baron I was here. I chooſe rather to lodge with

you;

you; and I propose to make amends for the trouble I shall give you.—Pray, Sir, don't mention it, said the Peasant, you are as welcome as myself; I hope no offence; the only reason of my sending was, because I am both unable and unworthy to entertain your Honour.—I am sorry, said Sir Philip, you should think me so dainty; I am a Christian soldier; and him I acknowledge for my Prince and Master, accepted the invitations of the poor, and washed the feet of his disciples. Let us say no more on this head; I am resolved to stay this night in your cottage, to-morrow I will wait on the Baron, and thank him for his hospitable invitation. —That shall be as your Honour pleases, since you will condescend to stay here. John, do you run back and acquaint my Lord of it. —Not so, said Sir Philip; it is now almost dark.—'Tis no matter, said John, I can go it blindfold. Sir Philip then gave him a message to the Baron in his own name, acquainting him that he would pay his respects to him in the morning. John flew back the second time, and soon returned with new commendations from the Baron, and that he would

would expect him on the morrow. Sir Philip gave him an angel of gold, and praised his speed and abilities.

He supped with Wyatt and his family upon new laid eggs and rashers of bacon, with the highest relish. They praised the Creator for his gifts, and acknowledged they were unworthy of the least of his blessings. They gave the best of their two lofts up to Sir Philip, the rest of the family slept in the other, the old woman and her daughter in the bed, the father and his two sons upon clean straw. Sir Philip's bed was of a better kind, and yet much inferior to his usual accommodations; nevertheless the good Knight slept as well in Wyatt's cottage, as he could have done in a palace.

During his sleep, many strange and incoherent dreams arose to his imagination. He thought he received a message from his friend Lord Lovel, to come to him at the Castle; that he stood at the gate and received him; that he strove to embrace him, but could not; but that he spoke to this effect:—Though I have been dead these fifteen years, I still command here, and none can enter these gates



without

without my permiſſion; know that it is I that invite, and bid you welcome; the hopes of my houſe reſt upon you.—Upon this he bid Sir Philip follow him; he led him through many rooms, till at laſt he ſunk down, and Sir Philip thought he ſtill followed him, till he came into a dark and frightful cave, where he diſappeared, and in his ſtead he beheld a complete ſuit of armour ſtained with blood, which belonged to his friend, and he thought he heard diſmal groans from beneath. Preſently after, he thought he was hurried away by an inviſible hand, and led into a wild heath, where the people were encloſing the ground, and making preparations for two combatants; the trumpet ſounded, and a voice called out ſtill louder,—Forbear! It is not permitted to be revealed till the time is ripe for the event: Wait with patience on the decrees of heaven.—He was then tranſported to his own houſe, where, going into an unfrequented room, he was again met by his friend, who was living, and in all the bloom of youth, as when he firſt knew him: He ſtarted at the ſight, and awoke. The ſun ſhone upon his curtains, and, perceiving it

was day, he ſat up, and recollected where he was. The images that impreſſed his ſleeping fancy remained ſtrongly on his mind waking; but his reaſon ſtrove to diſperſe them; it was natural that the ſtory he had heard ſhould create theſe ideas, that they ſhould wait on him in his ſleep, and that every dream ſhould bear ſome relation to his deceaſed friend. The ſun dazzled his eyes, the birds ſerenaded him and diverted his attention, and a woodbine forced its way through the window, and regaled his ſenſe of ſmelling with its fragrance. He aroſe, paid his devotions to Heaven, and then carefully deſcended the narrow ſtairs, and went out at the door of the cottage. There he ſaw the induſtrious wife and daughter of old Wyatt at their morning work, the one milking her cow, the other feeding her poultry. He aſked for a draught of milk, which, with a ſlice of rye bread, ſerved to break his faſt. He walked about the fields alone; for old Wyatt and his two ſons were gone out to their daily labour. He was ſoon called back by the good woman, who told him that a ſervant from the Baron waited to conduct him to the Caſtle. He took leave

of Wyatt's wife, telling her he would ſee her again before he left the country. The daughter fetched his horſe, which he mounted, and ſet forward with the ſervant, of whom he aſked many queſtions concerning his maſter's family.—How long have you lived with the Baron?—Ten years.—Is he a good maſter? Yes, Sir, and alſo a good huſband and father. —What family has he?—Three ſons and a daughter.—What age are they of?—The eldeſt ſon is in his ſeventeenth year, the ſecond in his ſixteenth, the others ſeveral years younger; but beſide theſe, my Lord has ſeveral young gentlemen brought up with his own ſons; two of which are his nephews; he keeps in his houſe a learned clerk to teach them languages; and as for all bodily exerciſes, none come near them; there is a fletcher to teach them the uſe of the croſs-bow; a maſter to teach them to ride; another the uſe of the ſword; another learns them to dance; and then they wreſtle and run, and have ſuch activity in all their motions, that it does one good to ſee them; and my Lord thinks nothing too much to beſtow on their education.—Truly, ſays Sir Philip, he does the part

of

of a good parent, and I honour him greatly for it; but are the young gentlemen of a promising disposition?—Yes, indeed, Sir, answered the servant; the young gentlemen, my Lord's sons, are hopeful youths; but yet there is one who is thought to exceed them all, though he is the son of a poor labourer.—And who is he? said the Knight.—One Edmund Twyford, the son of a cottager in our village; he is to be sure as fine a youth as ever the sun shone upon, and of so sweet a disposition that nobody envies his good fortune.—What good fortune does he enjoy?—Why, Sir, about two years ago, my Lord, at his sons request, took him into his own family, and gives him the same education as his own children; the young Lords doat upon him, especially Master William, who is about his own age: It is supposed that he will attend the young Lords when they go to the wars, which my Lord intends they shall by and bye.—What you tell me, said Sir Philip, increases every minute my respect for your Lord; he is an excellent father and master, he seeks out merit in obscurity, he

distinguishes and rewards it: I honour him with all my heart.

In this manner they conversed together till they came within view of the Castle. In a field near the house they saw a company of youths, with cross-bows in their hands, shooting at a mark.—There, said the servant, are our young gentlemen at their exercises. Sir Philip stopped his horse to observe them, he heard two or three of them cry out—Edmund is the victor! He wins the prize! I must, said Sir Philip, take a view of this Edmund—He jumped off his horse, gave the bridle to the servant, and walked into the field. The young gentlemen came up, and paid their respects to him; he apologized for intruding upon their sports, and asked which was the victor? Upon which the youth he spoke to beckoned to another, who immediately advanced, and made his obeisance: As he drew near, Sir Philip fixed his eyes upon him, with so much attention, that he seemed not to observe his courtesy and address. At length he recollected himself, and said,—What is your name, young man? —Edmund Twyford, replied the youth; and I have the honour to attend upon the Lord

Fitz-

Fitz-Owen's ſons.—Pray, noble Sir, ſaid the youth who firſt addreſſed Sir Philip, are not you the ſtranger who is expected by my father?—I am, Sir, anſwered he, and I go to pay my reſpects to him.—Will you excuſe our attendance, Sir? We have not yet finiſhed our exerciſes.—My dear youth, ſaid Sir Philip, no apology is neceſſary; but will you favour me with your proper name, that I may know to whoſe courteſy I am obliged?—My name is William Fitz-Owen; that Gentleman is my eldeſt brother, Maſter Robert; that other my kinſman, Maſter Richard Wenlock.—Very well; I thank you, gentle Sir; I beg you not to ſtir another ſtep, your ſervant holds my horſe.—Farewell, Sir, ſaid Maſter William; I hope we ſhall have the pleaſure of meeting you at dinner.—The youths returned to their ſports, and Sir Philip mounted his horſe and proceeded to the Caſtle; he entered it with a deep ſigh, and melancholy recollections. The Baron received him with the utmoſt reſpect and courteſy. He gave a brief account of the principal events that had happened in the family of Lovel during his abſence; he ſpoke of the late Lord

Lovel with respect, of the present with the affection of a brother. Sir Philip, in return, gave a brief recital of his own adventures abroad, and of the disagreeable circumstances he had met with since his return home; he pathetically lamented the loss of all his friends, not forgetting that of his faithful servant on the way; saying he could be contented to give up the world, and retire to a religious house, but that he was withheld by the consideration, that some who depended entirely upon him, would want his presence and assistance; and, beside that, he thought he might be of service to many others. The Baron agreed with him in opinion, that a man was of much more service to the world who continued in it, than one who retired from it, and gave his fortune to the Church, whose servants did not always make the best use of it. Sir Philip then turned the conversation, and congratulated the Baron on his hopeful family; he praised their persons and address, and warmly applauded the care he bestowed on their education. The Baron listened with pleasure to the honest approbation of a worthy

heart.

heart, and enjoyed the true happineſs of a parent.

Sir Philip then made further inquiry concerning Edmund, whoſe appearance had ſtruck him with an impreſſion in his favour. That boy, ſaid the Baron, is the ſon of a cottager in this neighbourhood; his uncommon merit and gentleneſs of manners, diſtinguiſh him from thoſe of his own claſs; from his childhood he attracted the notice and affection of all that knew him; he was beloved every where but at his father's houſe, and there it ſhould ſeem that his merits were his crimes; for the Peaſant, his father, hated him, treated him ſeverely, and at length threatened to turn him out of doors; he uſed to run here and there on errands for my people, and at length they obliged me to take notice of him; my ſons earneſtly deſired I would take him into my family; I did ſo about two years ago, intending to make him their ſervant; but his extraordinary genius and diſpoſition have obliged me to look upon him in a ſuperior light; perhaps I may incur the cenſure of many people, by giving him ſo many advantages, and treating him as the companion of

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my children: His merit muſt juſtify, or condemn, my partiality for him; however, I truſt that I have ſecured to my children a faithful ſervant of the upper kind, and an uſeful friend to my family. Sir Philip warmly applauded his generous hoſt, and wiſhed to be a ſharer in his bounty to that fine youth, whoſe appearance indicated all the qualities that had endeared him to his companions.

At the hour of dinner the young men preſented themſelves before their Lord, and his gueſt. Sir Philip addreſſed himſelf to Edmund; he aſked him many queſtions, and received modeſt and intelligent anſwers, and he grew every minute more pleaſed with him. After dinner the youths withdrew with their tutor to purſue their ſtudies. Sir Philip ſat, for ſome time, wrapt up in meditation. After ſome minutes, the Baron aſked him, if he might not be favoured with the fruits of his contemplations?—You ſhall, my Lord, anſwered he, for you have a right to them. I was thinking, that when many bleſſings are loſt, we ſhould cheriſh thoſe that remain, and even endeavour to replace the others—My Lord,

Lord, I have taken a ſtrong liking to that youth whom you call Edmund Twyford: I have neither children nor relations to claim my fortune, nor ſhare my affections; your Lordſhip has many demands upon your generoſity: I can provide for this promiſing youth without doing injuſtice to any one; will you give him to me?—He is a fortunate boy, ſaid the Baron, to gain your favour ſo ſoon.—My Lord, ſaid the Knight, I will confeſs to you, that the firſt thing that touched my heart in his favour, is a ſtrong reſemblance he bears to a certain dear friend I once had, and his manner reſembles him as much as his perſon; his qualities deſerve that he ſhould be placed in a higher rank; I will adopt him for my ſon, and introduce him into the world as my relation, if you will reſign him to me: What ſay you?—Sir, ſaid the Baron, you have made a noble offer, and I am too much the young man's friend to be a hindrance to his preferment. It is true that I intended to provide for him in my own family; but I cannot do it ſo effectually as by giving him to you, whoſe generous affection being unlimited by other ties, may in time prefer him to a

 higher

higher station, as he shall deserve it. I have only one condition to make; that the lad shall have his option; for I would not oblige him to leave my service against his inclination.—You say well, replied Sir Philip; nor would I take him upon other terms.—Agreed then, said the Baron; let us send for Edmund hither. A servant was sent to fetch him; he came immediately, and his Lord thus bespoke him:—Edmund, you owe eternal obligations to this gentleman, who, perceiving in you a certain resemblance to a friend of his, and liking your behaviour, has taken a great affection for you, insomuch that he desires to receive you into his family: I cannot better provide for you than by disposing of you to him; and, if you have no objection, you shall return home with him when he goes from hence. The countenance of Edmund underwent many alterations during this proposal of his Lord; it expressed tenderness, gratitude, and sorrow, but the last was predominant; he bowed respectfully to the Baron and Sir Philip, and, after some hesitation, spoke as follows:—I feel very strongly the obligations I owe to this gentleman, for

his

his noble and generous offer; I cannot express the sense I have of his goodness to me, a Peasant boy, only known to him by my Lord's kind and partial mention; this uncommon bounty claims my eternal gratitude. To you, my honoured Lord, I owe every thing, even this gentleman's good opinion; you distinguished me when nobody else did; and, next to you, your sons are my best and dearest benefactors, they introduced me to your notice. My heart is unalterably attached to this house and family, and my utmost ambition is to spend my life in your service: But if you have perceived any great and grievous faults in me, that make you wish to put me out of your family, and if you have recommended me to this gentleman in order to be rid of me, in that case I will submit to your pleasure, as I would if you should sentence me to death.

During this speech the tears made themselves channels down Edmund's cheeks; and his two noble auditors, catching the tender infection, wiped their eyes at the conclusion. —My dear child, said the Baron, you overcome me by your tenderness and gratitude! I know

I know of no faults you have committed, that I ſhould wiſh to be rid of you: I thought to do you the beſt ſervice by promoting you to that of Sir Philip Harclay, who is both able and willing to provide for you; but if you prefer my ſervice to his, I will not part with you. Upon this Edmund kneeled to the Baron; he embraced his knees—My dear Lord! I am, and will be your ſervant, in preference to any man living; I only aſk your permiſſion to live and die in your ſervice.—You ſee, Sir Philip, ſaid the Baron, how this boy engages the heart; how can I part with him?—I cannot aſk you any more, anſwered Sir Philip, I ſee it is impoſſible; but I eſteem you both ſtill higher than ever; the youth for his gratitude, and your Lordſhip for your noble mind and true generoſity; bleſſings attend you both!——Oh, Sir, ſaid Edmund, preſſing the hand of Sir Philip, do not think me ungrateful to you, I will ever remember your goodneſs, and pray to Heaven to reward it; the name of Sir Philip Harclay ſhall be engraven upon my heart, next to my Lord and his family, for ever. Sir Philip raiſed the youth and


embraced

embraced him, ſaying,—If ever you want a friend, remember me; and depend upon my protection, ſo long as you continue to deſerve it. Edmund bowed low, and withdrew, with his eyes full of tears of ſenſibility and gratitude. When he was gone, Sir Philip ſaid, I am thinking, that though young Edmund wants not my aſſiſtance at preſent, he may hereafter ſtand in need of my friendſhip. I ſhould not wonder if ſuch rare qualities as he poſſeſſes, ſhould one day create envy, and raiſe him enemies; in which caſe he might come to loſe your favour, without any fault of yours or his own.—I am obliged to you for the warning, ſaid the Baron, I hope it will be unneceſſary; but if ever I part with Edmund, you ſhall have the refuſal of him. I thank your Lordſhip for all your civilities to me, ſaid the Knight; I leave my beſt wiſhes with you and your hopeful family, and I humbly take my leave.—Will you not ſtay one night in the Caſtle? returned my Lord; you ſhall be as welcome a gueſt as ever.—I acknowledge your goodneſs and hoſpitality, but this houſe fills me with melancholy recollections; I came hither with a

heavy heart, and it will not be lighter while I remain here. I ſhall always remember your Lordſhip with the higheſt reſpect and eſteem; and I pray God to preſerve you, and increaſe your bleſſings!

After ſome further ceremonies, Sir Philip departed, and returned to old Wyatt's, ruminating on the viciſſitude of human affairs, and thinking on the changes he had ſeen.

At his return to Wyatt's cottage, he found the family aſſembled together. He told them he would take another night's lodging there, which they heard with great pleaſure; for he had familiariſed himſelf to them in the laſt evening's converſation, inſomuch that they began to enjoy his company. He told Wyatt of the misfortune he had ſuſtained by loſing his ſervant on the way, and wiſhed he could get one to attend him home in his place. Young John looked earneſtly at his father, who returned a look of approbation. I perceive one in this company, ſaid he, that would be proud to ſerve your Honour; but I fear he is not brought up well enough. John coloured with impatience; he could not forbear ſpeaking.—Sir, I can anſwer for an

honeſt

honeſt heart, a willing mind, and a light pair of heels; and though I am ſomewhat aukward, I ſhall be proud to learn to pleaſe my noble Maſter, if he will but try me. —You ſay well, ſaid Sir Philip, I have obſerved your qualifications, and if you are deſirous to ſerve me, I am equally pleaſed with you; if your father has no objection I will take you.—Objection, Sir! ſaid the old man; it will be my pride to prefer him to ſuch a noble gentleman; I will make no terms for him, but leave it to your Honour to do for him as he ſhall deſerve.—Very well, ſaid Sir Philip, you ſhall be no loſer by that; I will charge myſelf with the care of the young man. The bargain was ſtruck, and Sir Philip purchaſed a horſe for John of the old man. The next morning they ſet out; the Knight left marks of his bounty with the good couple, and departed, laden with their bleſſing and prayers. He ſtopped at the place where his faithful ſervant was buried, and cauſed maſſes to be ſaid for the repoſe of his ſoul; then, purſuing his way by eaſy journeys, arrived in ſafety at home. His family rejoiced at his return; he ſettled his new ſervant in attendance upon

his

his perſon; he then looked round his neighbourhood for objects of his charity; when he ſaw merit in diſtreſs, it was his delight to raiſe and ſupport it: He ſpent his time in the ſervice of his Creator, and glorified him in doing good to his creatures. He reflected frequently upon every thing that had befallen him in his late journey to the weſt; and at his leiſure, took down all the particulars in writing.

*Here follows an interval of four years, as by the manuſcript; and this omiſſion ſeems intended by the Writer. What follows is in a different hand, and the character is more modern.*

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ABOUT this time the prognoſtics of Sir Philip Harclay began to be verified, that Edmund's good qualities might one day excite envy and create him enemies. The ſons and kinſmen of his patron began to ſeek occaſion to find fault with him, and to depreciate him with others. The Baron's eldeſt ſon and heir, Maſter Robert, had ſeveral conteſts with Maſter William, the ſecond ſon, upon his

his account: This youth had a warm affection for Edmund, and whenever his brother and kinſmen treated him ſlightly, he ſupported him againſt their malicious inſinuations. Mr. Richard Wenlock, and Mr. John Markham, were the ſiſters ſons of the Lord Fitz-Owen; and there were ſeveral other more diſtant relations, who, with them, ſecretly envied Edmund's fine qualities, and ſtrove to leſſen him in the eſteem of the Baron and his family. By degrees they excited a diſlike in Maſter Robert, that in time was fixed into habit, and fell little ſhort of averſion.

Young Wenlock's hatred was confirmed by an additional circumſtance: He had a growing paſſion for the Lady Emma, the Baron's only daughter; and, as love is eagle-eyed, he ſaw, or fancied he ſaw her caſt an eye of preference on Edmund. An accidental ſervice that ſhe received from him, had excited her grateful regards and attentions towards him. The inceſſant view of his fine perſon and qualities, had perhaps improved her eſteem into a ſtill ſofter ſenſation, though ſhe

was

was yet ignorant of it, and thought it only the tribute due to gratitude and friendship.

One Christmas time, the Baron and all his family went to visit a family in Wales; crossing a ford, the horse that carried the Lady Emma, who rode behind her cousin Wenlock, stumbled and fell down, and threw her off into the water: Edmund dismounted in a moment, and flew to her assistance; he took her out so quick, that the accident was not known to some part of the company. From this time Wenlock strove to undermine Edmund in her esteem, and she conceived herself obliged in justice and gratitude to defend him against the malicious insinuations of his enemies. She one day asked Wenlock, why he in particular should endeavour to recommend himself to her favour, by speaking against Edmund, to whom she was under great obligations? He made but little reply; but the impression sunk deep into his rancorous heart; every word in Edmund's behalf was like a poisoned arrow that rankled in the wound, and grew every day more inflamed. Sometimes he would pretend to extenuate Edmund's supposed faults, in order

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to load him with the ſin of ingratitude upon other occaſions. Rancour works deepeſt in the heart that ſtrives to conceal it; and, when covered by art, frequently puts on the appearance of candour. By theſe means did Wenlock and Markham impoſe upon the credulity of Maſter Robert and their other relations: Maſter William only ſtood proof againſt all their inſinuations.

The ſame autumn that Edmund completed his eighteenth year, the Baron declared his intention of ſending the young men of his houſe to France the following ſpring, to learn the art of war, and ſignalize their courage and abilities.

Their ill-will towards Edmund was ſo well concealed, that his patron had not diſcovered it; but it was whiſpered among the ſervants, who are generally cloſe obſervers of the manners of their principals. Edmund was a favourite with them all, which was a ſtrong preſumption that he deſerved to be ſo, for they ſeldom ſhew much regard to dependents, or to ſuperior domeſtics, who are generally objects of envy and diſlike. Edmund was courteous, but not familiar with them; and, by

by this means, gained their affections without soliciting them. Among them was an old serving man, called Joseph Howell; this man had formerly served the old Lord Lovel, and his son; and when the young Lord died, and Sir Walter sold the castle to his brother-in-law, the Lord Fitz-Owen, he only of all the old servants was left in the house, to take care of it, and to deliver it into the possession of the new proprietor, who retained him in his service: He was a man of few words, but much reflection; and, without troubling himself about other people's affairs, went silently and properly about his own business; more solicitous to discharge his duty, than to recommend himself to notice, and not seeming to aspire to any higher office than that of a serving man. This old man would fix his eyes upon Edmund, whenever he could do it without observation; sometimes he would sigh deeply, and a tear would start from his eye, which he strove to conceal from observation. One day Edmund surprised him in this tender emotion, as he was wiping his eyes with the back of his hand:—Why, said he, my good friend, do you look at me so

earneſtly and affectionately?—Becauſe I love you, Maſter Edmund, ſaid he, becauſe I wiſh you well.—I thank you kindly, anſwered Edmund; I am unable to repay your love, otherwiſe than by returning it, which I do ſincerely.—I thank you, Sir, ſaid the old man; that is all I deſire, and more than I deſerve.—Do not ſay ſo, ſaid Edmund; if I had any better way to thank you, I would not ſay ſo much about it; but words are all my inheritance. Upon this he ſhook hands with Joſeph, who withdrew haſtily to conceal his emotion, ſaying, God bleſs you, Maſter, and make your fortune equal to your deſerts! I cannot help thinking you were born to a higher ſtation than what you now hold.——You know to the contrary, ſaid Edmund;—but Joſeph was gone out of ſight and hearing.

The notice and obſervation of ſtrangers, and the affection of individuals, together with that inward conſciouſneſs that always attends ſuperior qualities, would ſometimes kindle the flames of ambition in Edmund's heart; but he checked them preſently by reflecting upon his low birth and dependent ſtation.

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He was modest, yet intrepid; gentle and courteous to all, frank and unreserved to those that loved him; discreet and complaisant to those who hated him; generous and compassionate to the distresses of his fellow-creatures in general; humble, but not servile, to his patron and superiors. Once, when he with a manly spirit justified himself against a malicious imputation, his young Lord, Robert, taxed him with pride and arrogance to his kinsmen. Edmund denied the charge against him with equal spirit and modesty. Master Robert answered him sharply—How dare you contradict my cousins? do you mean to give them the lye?—Not in words, Sir, said Edmund; but I will behave so as that you shall not believe them. Master Robert haughtily bade him be silent and know himself, and not presume to contend with men so much his superiors in every respect. These heart-burnings in some degree subsided by their preparations for going to France. Master Robert was to be presented at court before his departure, and it was expected that he should be knighted. The Baron designed Edmund to be his Esquire; but

this was frustrated by his old enemies, who persuaded Robert to make choice of one of his own domestics, called Thomas Hewson; him did they set up as a rival to Edmund, and he took every occasion to affront him. All that Master Robert gained by this step, was the contempt of those who saw Edmund's merit, and thought it want of discernment in him not to distinguish and reward it. Edmund requested of his Lord that he might be Master William's attendant; and when, said he, my patron shall be knighted, as I make no doubt he will one day be, he has promised that I shall be his Esquire. The Baron granted Edmund's request; and, being freed from servitude to the rest, he was devoted to that of his beloved Master William, who treated him in public as his principal domestic, but in private as his chosen friend and brother.

The whole cabal of his enemies consulted together in what manner they should vent their resentment against him; and it was agreed that they should treat him with indifference and neglect, till they should arrive in France; and when there, they should contrive to render his courage suspected, and by put-



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ting him upon ſome deſperate enterprize, rid themſelves of him for ever. About this time died the great Duke of Bedford, to the irreparable loſs of the Engliſh nation. He was ſucceeded by Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, as Regent of France, of which great part had revolted to Charles the Dauphin. Frequent actions enſued. Cities were loſt and won: and continual occaſions offered to exerciſe the courage, and abilities, of the youth of both nations.

The young men of Baron Fitz-Owen's houſe were recommended particularly to the Regent's notice. Maſter Robert was knighted, with ſeveral other young men of family, who diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their ſpirit and activity upon every occaſion. The youth were daily employed in warlike exerciſes, and frequent actions; and made their firſt eſſay in arms in ſuch a manner as to bring into notice all that deſerved it.

Various arts were uſed by Edmund's enemies to expoſe him to danger; but all their contrivances recoiled upon themſelves, and brought increaſe of honour upon Edmund's head: He diſtinguiſhed himſelf upon ſo many occaſions, that Sir Robert himſelf began to pay him

him more than ordinary regard, to the infinite mortification of his kinſmen and relations. They laid many ſchemes againſt him, but none took effect.

*From this place the characters in the manuſcript are effaced by time and damp. Here and there ſome ſentences are legible, but not ſufficient to purſue the thread of the ſtory. Mention is made of ſeveral actions in which the young men were engaged——that Edmund diſtinguiſhed himſelf by intrepidity in action; by gentleneſs, humanity, and modeſty in the ceſſations—that he attracted the notice of every perſon of obſervation, and alſo, that he received perſonal commendation from the Regent.*

*The following incidents are clear enough to be tranſcribed; but the beginning of the next ſucceeding pages is obliterated: However we may gueſs at the beginning by what remains.*

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AS ſoon as the cabal met in Sir Robert's tent, Mr. Wenlock thus began:—You ſee, my friends, that every attempt we make to humble this upſtart, turns into applauſe, and ſerves only to raiſe his pride ſtill higher. Something muſt be done, or his praiſe will go home before us, at our own expence; and we ſhall ſeem only foils to ſet off his glories. Any thing would I give to the man who ſhould execute our vengeance upon him. —Stop there, couſin Wenlock, ſaid Sir Robert; though I think Edmund proud and vain-glorious, and would join in any ſcheme to humble him, and make him know himſelf, I will not ſuffer any man to uſe ſuch baſe methods to effect it. Edmund is brave; and it is beneath an Engliſhman to revenge himſelf by unworthy means; if any ſuch are uſed, I will be the firſt man to bring the guilty to juſtice; and if I hear another word to this purpoſe, I will inform my brother William, who will acquaint Edmund with your mean intentions.

intentions. Upon this the cabal drew back, and Mr. Wenlock protested that he meant no more than to mortify his pride, and make him know his proper station. Soon after Sir Robert withdrew, and they resumed their deliberations.

Then spoke Thomas Hewson: There is a party to be sent out to-morrow night, to intercept a convoy of provisions for the relief of Rouen; I will provoke Mr. Edmund to make one of this party, and when he is engaged in the action, I and my companions will draw off, and leave him to the enemy, who I trust will so handle him, that you shall no more be troubled with him.—This will do, said Mr. Wenlock; but let it be kept from my two cousins, and only known to ourselves; if they offer to be of the party, I will persuade them off it: And you, Thomas, if you bring this scheme to a conclusion, may depend upon my eternal gratitude.—And mine, said Markham; and so said all. The next day the affair was publicly mentioned; and Hewson, as he promised, provoked Edmund to the trial: Several young men of family offered themselves; among the rest, Sir Robert, and his brother

William. Mr. Wenlock persuaded them not to go, and set the danger of the enterprize in the strongest colours. At last Sir Robert complained of the tooth-ach, and was confined to his tent; Edmund waited on him; and judging by the ardour of his own courage of that of his patron, thus bespoke him:—I am greatly concerned, dear Sir, that we cannot have your company at night; but as I know what you will suffer in being absent, I would beg the favour of you to let me use your arms and device, and I will promise not to disgrace them.—No, Edmund, I cannot consent to that: I thank you for your noble offer, and will remember it to your advantage; but I cannot wear honours of another man's getting. You have awakened me to a sense of my duty: I will go with you, and contend with you for glory; and William shall do the same.

In a few hours they were ready to set out. Wenlock and Markham, and their dependants, found themselves engaged in honour to go upon an enterprize they never intended; and set out, with heavy hearts, to join the party. They marched in silence in the horrors of a dark night, and wet roads; they met the

the convoy where they expected, and a sharp engagement ensued. The victory was some time doubtful; but the moon rising on the backs of the English, gave them the advantage. They saw the disposition of their enemies, and availed themselves of it. Edmund advanced the foremost of the party; he drew out the leader on the French side; he slew him. Mr. William pressed forward to assist his friend; Sir Robert, to defend his brother; Wenlock and Markham, from shame to stay behind.

Thomas Hewson and his associates drew back on their side; the French perceived it, and pursued the advantage. Edmund pushed them in front; the young nobles all followed him; they broke through the detachment, and stopped the waggons. The officer who commanded the party, encouraged them to go on; the defeat was soon complete, and the provisions carried in triumph to the English camp.

Edmund was presented to the Regent, as the man to whom the victory was chiefly owing. Not a tongue presumed to move itself against him; even malice and envy were silenced.

Approach, young man, ſaid the Regent, that I may confer upon you the honour of knighthood, which you have well deſerved. Mr. Wenlock could no longer forbear ſpeaking: Knighthood, ſaid he, is an order belonging to gentlemen, it cannot be conferred on a peaſant.—What ſay you, Sir! returned the Regent; is this youth a peaſant?—He is, ſaid Wenlock, let him deny it if he can. Edmund, with a modeſt bow, replied,—It is true indeed I am a peaſant, and this honour is too great for me: I have only done my duty. The duke of York, whoſe pride of birth equalled that of any man living or dead, ſheathed his ſword immediately.—Though, ſaid he, I cannot reward you as I intended, I will take care that you ſhall have a large ſhare in the ſpoils of this night; and, I declare publicly, that you ſtand firſt in the liſt of gallant men in this engagement.

Thomas Hewſon and his aſſociates made a poor figure in their return; they were publicly reproved for their backwardneſs. Hewſon was wounded in body, and more in mind, for the bad ſucceſs of his ill-laid deſign. He could not hold up his head before Edmund; who, unconſcious of their malice, adminiſter-

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ed every kind of comfort to them. He ſpoke in their behalf to the commanding officer, imputing their conduct to unavoidable accidents. He viſited them privately; he gave them a part of the ſpoils allotted to himſelf; by every act of valour and courteſy he ſtrove to engage thoſe hearts that hated, envied, and maligned him: But where hatred ariſes from envy of ſuperior qualities, every diſplay of thoſe qualities increaſes the cauſe from whence it ariſes.

*Another pauſe enſues here.*

The young nobles and gentlemen who diſtinguiſhed Edmund, were prevented from raiſing him to preferment by the inſinuations of Wenlock and his aſſociates, who never failed to ſet before them his low deſcent, and his pride and arrogance in preſuming to rank with gentlemen.

*Here the manuſcript is not legible for ſeveral pages. There is mention, about this time, of the death of the Lady Fitz-Owen; but not the cauſe.*

Wenlock rejoiced to find that his ſchemes took effect, and that they ſhould be recalled

at the approach of winter. The Baron was glad of a pretence to fend for them home; for he could no longer endure the abfence of his children, after the lofs of their mother.

*The manufcript is again defaced for many leaves; at length the letters become more legible, and the remainder of it is quite perfect.*

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FROM the time the young men returned from France, the enemies of Edmund employed their utmoft abilities to ruin him in the Baron's opinion, and get him difmiffed from the family. They infinuated a thoufand things againft him, that happened, as they faid, during his refidence in France, and therefore could not be known to his mafter; but, when the Baron privately inquired of his two elder fons, he found there was no truth in their reports. Sir Robert, though he did not love him, fcorned to join in untruths againft him. Mr. William fpoke of him with the warmth of fraternal affection. The Baron perceived that his kinfmen difliked Edmund;

mund; but his own good heart hindered him from ſeeing the baſeneſs of theirs. It is ſaid, that continual dropping will wear away a ſtone; ſo did their inceſſant reports, by inſenſible degrees, produce a coolneſs in his patron's behaviour towards him. If he behaved with manly ſpirit, it was miſconſtrued into pride and arrogance; his generoſity was imprudence; his humility was hypocriſy, the better to cover his ambition. Edmund bore patiently all the indignities that were thrown upon him; and, though he felt them ſeverely in his boſom, ſcorned to juſtify his conduct at the expence even of his enemies. Perhaps his gentle ſpirit might at length have ſunk under this treatment, but Providence interpoſed in his behalf; and, by ſeemingly accidental circumſtances, conducted him imperceptibly towards the criſis of his fate.

Father Oſwald, who had been preceptor to the young men, had a ſtrong affection for Edmund, from a thorough knowledge of his heart; he ſaw through the mean artifices that were uſed to undermine him in his patron's favour; he watched their machinations, and ſtrove to fruſtrate their deſigns.

This good man ufed frequently to walk out with Edmund; they converfed upon various fubjects; and the youth would lament to him the unhappinefs of his fituation, and the peculiar circumftances that attended him. The father, by his wholefome advice, comforted his drooping heart; and confirmed him in his refolution of bearing unavoidable evils with patience and fortitude, from the confcioufnefs of his own innocence, and the affurance of a future and eternal reward.

One day, as they were walking in a wood near the Caftle, Edmund afked the father, what meant thofe preparations for building, the cutting down trees, and burning of bricks?—What, faid Ofwald, have you not heard that my Lord is going to build a new apartment on the weft fide of the caftle?—And why, faid Edmund, fhould my Lord be at that expence when there is one on the eaft fide that is never occupied?—That apartment, faid the friar, you muft have obferved is always fhut up.—I have obferved it often, faid Edmund, but I never prefumed to afk any queftions about it.—You had then, faid Ofwald, lefs curiofity, and more difcretion, than is common at your age.—You have raifed

raiſed my curioſity, ſaid Edmund; and, if it be not improper, I beg of you to gratify it.—We are alone, ſaid Oſwald, and I am ſo well aſſured of your prudence, that I will explain this myſtery in ſome degree to you.

You muſt know, that apartment was occupied by the laſt Lord Lovel when he was a bachelor. He married in his father's life-time, who gave up his own apartment to him, and offered to retire to this himſelf; but the ſon would not permit him; he choſe to ſleep here rather than in any other. He had been married about three months, when his father, the old Lord, died of a fever. About twelve months after his marriage, he was called upon to attend the King, Henry the Fourth, on an expedition into Wales, whither he was attended by many of his dependants. He left his Lady big with child, and full of care and anxiety for his ſafety and return.

After the King had chaſtiſed the Rebels, and obtained the victory, the Lord Lovel was expected home every day; various reports were ſent home before him; one meſſenger brought an account of his health and ſafety; ſoon after another came with bad news, that

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he was ſlain in battle. His kinſman, Sir Walter Lovel, came here on a viſit to comfort the Lady; and he waited to receive his kinſman at his return. It was he that brought the news of the ſad event of the battle to the Lady Lovel.

She fainted away at the relation; but, when ſhe revived, exerted the utmoſt reſolution; ſaying, it was her duty to bear this dreadful ſtroke with Chriſtian fortitude and patience, eſpecially in regard to the child ſhe went with, the laſt remains of her beloved huſband, and the undoubted heir of a noble houſe. For ſeveral days ſhe ſeemed an example of patience and reſignation; but then, all at once, ſhe renounced them, and broke out into paſſionate and frantic exclamations; ſhe ſaid, that her dear Lord was baſely murdered; that his ghoſt had appeared to her, and revealed his fate: She called upon Heaven and earth to revenge her wrongs; ſaying, ſhe would never ceaſe complaining to God, and the King, for vengeance and juſtice.

Upon this, Sir Walter told the ſervants that Lady Lovel was diſtracted, from grief for the death of her Lord; that his regard for

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her was as ftrong as ever; and that, if fhe recovered, he would himfelf be her comforter, and marry her. In the mean time fhe was confined in this very apartment, and in lefs than a month the poor Lady died. She lies buried in the family vault in St. Auftin's church in the village. Sir Walter took poffeffion of the Caftle, and all the other eftates, and affumed the title of Lord Lovel.

Soon after, it was reported that the Caftle was haunted, and that the ghofts of Lord and Lady Lovel had been feen by feveral of the fervants. Whoever went into this apartment were terrified by uncommon noifes, and ftrange appearances; at length this apartment was wholly fhut up, and the fervants were forbid to enter it, or to talk of any thing relating to it: However, the ftory did not ftop here; it was whifpered about, that the new Lord Lovel was fo difturbed every night, that he could not fleep in quiet; and, being at laft tired of the place, he fold the Caftle and eftate of his anceftors, to his brother-in-law the Lord Fitz-Owen, who now enjoys it, and left this country.

All this is news to me, faid Edmund; but father, tell me what grounds there were for the

the Lady's ſuſpicion that her Lord died unfairly.—Alas! ſaid Oſwald, that is only known to God. There were ſtrange thoughts in the minds of many at that time; I had mine; but I will not diſcloſe them, not even to you. I will not injure thoſe who may be innocent; and I leave it to Providence, who will doubtleſs, in its own beſt time and manner, puniſh the guilty. But let what I have told you be as if you had never heard it.

I thank you for theſe marks of your eſteem and confidence, ſaid Edmund; be aſſured that I will not abuſe them; nor do I deſire to pry into ſecrets not proper to be revealed: I entirely approve your diſcretion, and acquieſce in your concluſion, that Providence will in its own time vindicate its ways to man: If it were not for that truſt, my ſituation would be inſupportable. I ſtrive earneſtly to deſerve the eſteem and favour of good men; I endeavour to regulate my conduct ſo as to avoid giving offence to any man; but I ſee, with infinite pain, that it is impoſſible for me to gain theſe points.—I ſee it too with great concern, ſaid Oſwald; and every thing that I can ſay and do in your favour is miſconſtrued; and, by ſeeking to do you ſervice, I

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lose my own influence: But I will never give my sanction to acts of injustice, nor join to oppress innocence. My dear child, put your trust in God: He who brought light out of darkness, can bring good out of evil. ——I hope and trust so, said Edmund; but, father, if my enemies should prevail, if my Lord should believe their stories against me, and I should be put out of the house with disgrace, what will become of me? I have nothing but my character to depend upon; if I lose that, I lose every thing; and I see they seek no less than my ruin.—Trust in my Lord's honour and justice, replied Oswald; he knows your virtue, and he is not ignorant of their ill-will towards you.—I know my Lord's justice too well to doubt it, said Edmund; but would it not be better to rid him of this trouble, and his family of an incumbrance? I would gladly do something for myself, but cannot without my Lord's recommendation; and, such is my situation, that I fear the asking for a dismission would be accounted base ingratitude: Beside, when I think of leaving this house, my heart saddens at the thought, and tells me I cannot be happy out of it: Yet, I think I could return to

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a peaſant's life with cheerfulneſs, rather than live in a palace under diſdain and contempt. —Have patience a little longer, my ſon, ſaid Oſwald; I will think of ſome way to ſerve you, and to repreſent your grievances to my Lord, without offence to either: Perhaps the cauſes may be removed. Continue to obſerve the ſame irreproachable conduct; and be aſſured that Heaven will defend your innocence, and defeat the unjuſt deſigns of your enemies. Let us now return home.

About a week after this conference, Edmund walked out in the fields ruminating on the diſagreeable circumſtances of his ſituation. Inſenſible of the time, he had been out ſeveral hours without perceiving how the day wore away, when he heard himſelf called by name ſeveral times; looking backward, he ſaw his friend, Mr. William, and hallooed to him. He came running towards him; and, leaping over the ſtile, ſtood ſtill a while to recover his breath.—What is the matter, Sir? ſaid Edmund; your looks beſpeak ſome tidings of importance. With a look of tender concern and affection, the youth preſſed his hand and ſpoke:—My dear Edmund, you muſt come home with me directly; your old enemies

mies have united to ruin you with my father; my brother Robert has declared that he thinks there will be no peace in our family till you are diſmiſſed from it, and told my father, he hoped he would not break with his kinſmen rather than give up Edmund.—But what do they lay to my charge? ſaid Edmund.—I cannot rightly underſtand, anſwered William, for they make a great myſtery of it; ſomething of great conſequence, they ſay; but they will not tell me what: However, my father has told them that they muſt bring their accuſation before your face, and he will have you anſwer them publicly. I have been ſeeking you this hour, to inform you of this, that you might be prepared to defend yourſelf againſt your accuſers.—God reward you, Sir, ſaid Edmund, for all your goodneſs to me! I ſee they are determined to ruin me if poſſible: I ſhall be compelled to leave the Caſtle; but whatever becomes of me, be aſſured you ſhall have no cauſe to bluſh for your kindneſs and partiality to your Edmund. —I know it, I am ſure of it, ſaid William; and here I ſwear to you, as Jonathan did to David, I beſeech Heaven to bleſs me, as my friendſhip to you ſhall be ſteady and inviolable!

lable!—Only ſo long as I ſhall deſerve ſo great a bleſſing, interrupted Edmund.—I know your worth and honour, continued William; and ſuch is my confidence in your merit, that I firmly believe Heaven deſigns you for ſomething extraordinary; and I expect that ſome great and unforeſeen event will raiſe you to the rank and ſtation to which you appear to belong: Promiſe me, therefore, that whatever may be your fate, you will preſerve the ſame friendſhip for me that I bear to you.—Edmund was ſo much affected that he could not anſwer but in broken ſentences.—Oh my friend, my maſter! I vow, I promiſe, my heart promiſes! He kneeled down with claſped hands, and uplifted eyes: William kneeled by him, and they invoked the Supreme to witneſs to their friendſhip, and implored his bleſſing upon it: They then roſe up and embraced each other, while tears of cordial affection bedewed their cheeks.

As ſoon as they were able to ſpeak, Edmund conjured his friend not to expoſe himſelf to the diſpleaſure of his family out of kindneſs to him. I ſubmit to the will of Heaven, ſaid he, I wait with patience its diſpoſal

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of me; if I leave the Caſtle, I will find means to inform you of my fate and fortunes.—I hope, ſaid William, that things may yet be accommodated; but do not take any reſolution, let us act as occaſions ariſe.

In this manner theſe amiable youths conferred, till they arrived at the Caſtle. The Baron was ſitting in the great hall, on a high chair with a footſtep before, with the ſtate and dignity of a judge; before him ſtood father Oſwald, as pleading the cauſe for himſelf and Edmund. Round the Baron's chair ſtood his eldeſt ſon and his kinſmen, with their principal domeſtics. The old ſervant, Joſeph, at ſome diſtance, with his head leaning forward, as liſtening with the utmoſt attention to what paſſed. Mr. William approached the chair.—My Lord, I have found Edmund, and brought him to anſwer for himſelf.—You have done well, ſaid the Baron. Edmund come hither; you are charged with ſome indiſcretions, for I cannot properly call them crimes: I am reſolved to do juſtice between you and your accuſers; I ſhall therefore hear you as well as them; for no man ought to be condemned unheard.—My Lord, ſaid Edmund, with equal modeſty and intrepidity,

pidity, I demand my trial; if I ſhall be found guilty of any crimes againſt my Benefactor, let me be puniſhed with the utmoſt rigour: But if, as I truſt, no ſuch charge can be proved againſt me, I know your goodneſs too well to doubt that you will do juſtice to me, as well as to others; and, if it ſhould ſo happen, that by the miſrepreſentations of my enemies (who have long ſought my ruin privately, and now avow it publicly) if by their artifices your Lordſhip ſhould be induced to think me guilty, I would ſubmit to your ſentence in ſilence, and appeal to another tribunal.—See, ſaid Mr. Wenlock, the confidence of the fellow! he already ſuppoſes that my Lord muſt be in the wrong if he condemns him; and then this meek creature will appeal to another tribunal: To whoſe will he appeal? I deſire he may be made to explain himſelf.—That I will immediately, ſaid Edmund, without being compelled; I only meant to appeal to Heaven, that beſt knows my innocence.—'Tis true, ſaid the Baron, and no offence to any one; man can only judge by appearances, but Heaven knows the heart: Let every one of you bear this in mind, that you may not bring a falſe accu-

ſation,

ſation, nor juſtify yourſelves by concealing the truth. Edmund, I am informed that Oſwald and you have made very free with me and my family, in ſome of your converſations; you were heard to cenſure me for the abſurdity of building a new apartment on the weſt ſide of the Caſtle, when there was one on the eaſt ſide uninhabited: Oſwald ſaid, that apartment was ſhut up becauſe it was haunted; that ſome ſhocking murder had been committed there; adding many particulars concerning Lord Lovel's family, ſuch as he could not know the truth of, and, if he had known, was imprudent to reveal. But further, you complained of ill treatment here; and mentioned an intention to leave the Caſtle, and ſeek your fortune elſewhere. I ſhall examine into all theſe particulars in turn. At preſent I deſire you, Edmund, to relate all that you can remember of the converſation that paſſed between you and Oſwald in the wood laſt Monday.—Good God! ſaid Edmund, is it poſſible that any perſon could put ſuch a conſtruction upon ſo innocent a converſation?

Tell me then, ſaid the Baron, the particulars of it.—I will, my Lord, as nearly as my

my memory will allow me. Accordingly he related most of the conversation that passed in the wood; but, in the part that concerned the family of Lovel, he abbreviated as much as possible. Oswald's countenance cleared up, for he had done the same before Edmund came. The Baron called to his eldest son,—You hear, Sir Robert, what both parties say: I have questioned them separately; neither of them knew what the other would answer, yet their accounts agree almost to a word.—I confess they do so, answered Sir Robert; but, Sir, it is very bold and presuming for them to speak of our family affairs in such a manner; if my uncle, Lord Lovel, should come to know it, he would punish them severely; and if his honour is reflected upon, it becomes us to resent and to punish it. Here Mr. Wenlock broke out into passion, and offered to swear to the truth of his accusation. Be silent, Dick, said the Baron; I shall judge for myself.—I protest, said he to Sir Robert, I never heard so much as Oswald has now told me concerning the deaths of Lord and Lady Lovel; I think it is best to let such stories alone till they die away of themselves. I had, indeed, heard of an idle story of the

east

east apartment's being haunted, when first I came hither, and my brother advised me to shut it up till it should be forgotten; but what has now been said, has suggested a thought that may make that apartment useful in future. I have thought of a punishment for Edmund that will stop the mouth of his accusers for the present; and, as I hope, will establish his credit with every body. Edmund, will you undertake this adventure for me?— What adventure, my Lord? said Edmund: There is nothing I would not undertake to shew my gratitude and fidelity to you. As to my courage, I would shew that at the expence of my malicious accusers, if respect to my Lord's blood did not tie up my hands; as I am situated, I beg it may be put to the proof in whatever way is most for my master's service.—That is well said, cried the Baron: As to your enemies, I am thinking how to separate you from them effectually; of that I shall speak hereafter. I am going to try Edmund's courage; he shall sleep three nights in the east apartment, that he may testify to all whether it be haunted or not; afterwards I will have that apartment set in order, and my eldest son shall take it for his own; it

will ſpare me ſome expence, and anſwer my purpoſe as well, or better: Will you conſent, Edmund?—With all my heart, my Lord, ſaid Edmund, I have not wilfully offended God or man; I have, therefore, nothing to fear.—Brave boy! ſaid my Lord; I am not deceived in you, nor ſhall you be deceived in your reliance on me. You ſhall ſleep in that apartment to-night, and to-morrow I will have ſome private talk with you. Do you, Oſwald, go with me; I want to have ſome converſation with you. The reſt of you, retire to your ſtudies and buſineſs; I will meet you at dinner.

Edmund retired to his own chamber, and Oſwald was ſhut up with the Baron; he defended Edmund's cauſe and his own, and laid open as much as he knew of the malice and deſigns of his enemies. The Baron expreſſed much concern at the untimely deaths of Lord and Lady Lovel, and deſired Oſwald to be circumſpect in regard to what he had to ſay of the circumſtances attending them; adding, that he was both innocent and ignorant of any treachery towards either of them. Oſwald excuſed himſelf for his communications to Edmund, ſaying, they fell undeſignedly into

into the ſubject, and that he mentioned it in confidence to him only.

The Baron ſent orders to the young men to come to dinner; but they refuſed to meet Edmund at table; accordingly he ate in the ſteward's apartment. After dinner, the Baron tried to reconcile his kinſmen to Edmund; but found it impoſſible. They ſaw their deſigns were laid open; and, judging of him by themſelves, thought it impoſſible to forgive or be forgiven. The Baron ordered them to keep in ſeparate apartments; he took his eldeſt ſon for his own companion, as being the moſt reaſonable of the malecontents; and ordered his kinſmen to keep their own apartment, with a ſervant to watch their motions. Mr. William had Oſwald for his companion. Old Joſeph was bid to attend on Edmund; to ſerve him at ſupper; and, at the hour of nine, to conduct him to the haunted apartment. Edmund deſired that he might have a light and his ſword, leſt his enemies ſhould endeavour to ſurpriſe him. The Baron thought his requeſt reaſonable, and complied with it.

There was a great ſearch to find the key of the apartment; at laſt it was diſcovered by

Edmund himſelf, among a parcel of old ruſty keys in a lumber-room. The Baron ſent the young men their ſuppers to their reſpective apartments. Edmund declined eating, and deſired to be conducted to his apartment. He was accompanied by moſt of the ſervants to the door of it; they wiſhed him ſucceſs, and prayed for him as if he had been going to execution.

The door was with great difficulty unlocked, and Joſeph gave Edmund a lighted lamp, and wiſhed him a good night; he returned his good wiſhes to them all with the utmoſt cheerfulneſs, took the key on the inſide of the door, and then diſmiſſed them.

He then took a ſurvey of his chamber; the furniture, by long neglect, was decayed and dropping to pieces; the bed was devoured by the moths, and occupied by the rats, who had built their neſts there with impunity for many generations. The bedding was very damp, for the rain had forced its way through the ceiling; he determined, therefore, to lie down in his clothes. There were two doors on the further ſide of the room, with keys in them; being not at all ſleepy, he reſolved to examine them; he attempted one lock, and

 opened

opened it with eafe; he went into a large dining-room, the furniture of which was in the fame tattered condition; out of this was a large clofet with fome books in it, and hung round with coats of arms, with genealogies and alliances of the houfe of Lovel; he amufed himfelf here fome minutes, and then returned into the bed-chamber.

He recollected the other door, and refolved to fee where it led to; the key was rufted into the lock, and refifted his attempts; he fet the lamp on the ground, and exerting all his ftrength, opened the door, and at the fame inftant the wind of it blew out the lamp, and left him in utter darknefs. At the fame moment he heard a hollow ruftling noife, like that of a perfon coming through a narrow paffage. Till this moment not one idea of fear had approached the mind of Edmund; but, juft then, all the concurrent circumftances of his fituation ftruck upon his heart, and gave him a new and difagreeable fenfation. He paufed a while; and recollecting himfelf, cried out aloud—What fhould I fear? I have not wilfully offended God or man; why then fhould I doubt protection? But I have not yet implored the divine affiftance;

ance; how then can I expect it? Upon this, he kneeled down and prayed earnestly, resigning himself wholly to the will of heaven; while he was yet speaking, his courage returned, and he resumed his usual confidence; again he approached the door from whence the noise proceeded; he thought he saw a glimmering light upon a staircase before him. If, said he, this apartment is haunted, I will use my endeavours to discover the cause of it; and if the spirit appears visibly, I will speak to it.

He was preparing to descend the staircase, when he heard several knocks at the door by which he first entered the room; and, stepping backward, the door was clapped to with great violence. Again fear attacked him; but he resisted it, and boldly cried out——Who is there?—A voice at the outer door answered, —It's I; Joseph, your friend!—What do you want? said Edmund—I have brought you some wood to make a fire, said Joseph.—I thank you kindly, said Edmund; but my lamp is gone out; I will try to find the door, however. After some trouble, he found, and opened it; and was not sorry to see his friend Joseph, with a light in one

hand, a flagon of beer in the other, and a fagot upon his ſhoulder.—I come, ſaid the good old man, to bring you ſomething to keep up your ſpirits; the evening is cold; I know this room wants airing; and beſide that, my Maſter, I think your preſent undertaking requires a little aſſiſtance.

My good friend, ſaid Edmund, I never ſhall be able to deſerve or requite your kindneſs to me.—My dear Sir, you always deſerved more than I could do for you; and I think I ſhall yet live to ſee you defeat the deſigns of your enemies, and acknowledge the ſervice of your friends.—Alas! ſaid Edmund, I ſee little proſpect of that!—I ſee, ſaid Joſeph, ſomething that perſuades me you are deſigned for great things; and I perceive that things are working about to ſome great end: Have courage, my Maſter, my heart beats ſtrangely high upon your account!—You make me ſmile, ſaid Edmund.—I am glad to ſee it, Sir; may you ſmile all the reſt of your life!—I thank your honeſt affection, returned Edmund, though it is too partial to me. You had better go to bed, however; if it is known that you viſit me here, it will be bad for us both.—So I will preſently; but, pleaſe God,

I will come here again to-morrow night, when all the family are a-bed; and I will tell you some things that you never yet heard. —But pray tell me, said Edmund, where does that door lead to?—Upon a passage that ends in a staircase that leads to the lower rooms; and there is likewise a door out of that passage into the dining-room.—And what rooms are there below stairs, said Edmund?—The same as above, replied he.—Very well; then I wish you a good night; we will talk further to-morrow.—Aye, to-morrow night; and in this place, my dear Master.—Why do you call me your Master? I never was, nor ever can be, your Master.—God only knows that, said the good old man; good night, and Heaven bless you!—Good night, my worthy friend!

Joseph withdrew, and Edmund returned to the other door, and attempted several times to open it in vain; his hands were benumbed and tired; at length he gave over. He made a fire in the chimney, placed the lamp on a table, and opened one of the window-shutters to admit the day-light; he then recommended himself to the divine protection, and threw himself upon the bed; he presently fell asleep, and

and continued in that ſtate, till the ſun ſaluted him with his orient beams through the window he had opened.

As ſoon as he was perfectly awake, he ſtrove to recollect his dreams. He thought that he heard people coming up the ſtaircaſe that he had a glimpſe of; that the door opened, and there entered a Warrior, leading a Lady by the hand, who was young and beautiful, but pale and wan: The man was dreſſed in complete armour, and his helmet down. They approached the bed; they undrew the curtains. He thought the man ſaid,—Is this our child? The woman replied,—It is; and the hour approaches that he ſhall be known for ſuch. They then ſeparated, and one ſtood on each ſide of the bed; their hands met over his head, and they gave him a ſolemn benediction. He ſtrove to riſe and pay them his reſpects, but they forbad him; and the Lady ſaid,—Sleep in peace, oh, my Edmund! for thoſe who are the true poſſeſſors of this apartment are employed in thy preſervation: Sleep on, ſweet hope of a houſe that is thought paſt hope!—Upon this, they withdrew, and went out at the ſame door by which they entered, and he heard them

descend the stairs.—After this, he followed a funeral as chief mourner; he saw the whole procession, and heard the ceremonies performed. He was snatched away from this mournful scene to one of a contrary kind, a stately feast, at which he presided; and he heard himself congratulated as a husband, and a father: His friend William sat by his side; and his happiness was complete. Every succeeding idea was happiness without allay; and his mind was not idle a moment till the morning sun awakened him. He perfectly remembered his dreams, and meditated on what all these things should portend.—Am I then, said he, not Edmund Twyford, but somebody of consequence in whose fate so many people are interested? Vain thought, that must have arisen from the partial suggestion of my two friends, Mr. William and old Joseph!

He lay thus reflecting, when a servant knocked at the door, and told him it was past six o'clock, and that the Baron expected him to breakfast in an hour. He rose immediately; paid his tribute of thanks to heaven for its protection, and went from his chamber in high health and spirits.

He walked in the garden till the hour of breakfaſt, and then attended the Baron.—Good morrow, Edmund! ſaid he; how have you reſted in your new apartment?—Extremely well, my Lord, anſwered he.—I am glad to hear it, ſaid the Baron; but I did not know your accommodations were ſo bad, as Joſeph tells me they are.—'Tis of no conſequence, ſaid Edmund; if they were much worſe, I could diſpenſe with them for three nights.—Very well, ſaid the Baron; you are a brave lad: I am ſatisfied with you, and will excuſe the other two nights.—But, my Lord, I will not be excuſed; no one ſhall have reaſon to ſuſpect my courage; I am determined to go through the remaining nights upon many accounts.—That ſhall be as you pleaſe, ſaid my Lord. I think of you as you deſerve; ſo well, that I ſhall aſk your advice by and bye in ſome affairs of conſequence.—My life and ſervices are yours, my Lord; command them freely.—Let Oſwald be called in, ſaid my Lord; he ſhall be one of our conſultation. He came; the ſervants were diſmiſſed; and the Baron ſpoke as follows:—Edmund, when firſt I took you into my family, it was at the requeſt of my ſons and kinſ-

men; I bear witneſs to your good behaviour, you have not deſerved to loſe their eſteem; but, nevertheleſs, I have obſerved for ſome years paſt, that all but my ſon William have ſet their faces againſt you: I ſee their meanneſs, and I perceive their motives: But they are, and muſt be my relations; and I would rather govern them by love, than fear. I love and eſteem your virtues: I cannot give you up to gratify their humours. My ſon William has loſt the affections of the reſt, for that he bears to you; but he has increaſed my regard to him: I think myſelf bound in honour to him and you to provide for you! I cannot do it, as I wiſhed, under my own roof. If you ſtay here, I ſee nothing but confuſion in my family; yet I cannot put you out of it diſgraceefully. I want to think of ſome way to prefer you, that you may leave this houſe with honour; and I deſire both of you to give me your advice in this matter. If Edmund will tell me in what way I can employ him to his own honour and my advantage, I am ready to do it; let him propoſe it, and Oſwald ſhall moderate between us.

Here he ſtopped; and Edmund, whoſe ſighs almoſt choaked him, threw himſelf at

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the Baron's feet, and wet his hand with his tears. Oh, my noble, generous benefactor! do you condescend to consult such a one as me upon the state of your family? Does your most amiable and beloved son incur the ill-will of his brothers and kinsmen for my sake? What am I, that I should disturb the peace of this noble family? Oh, my Lord, send me away directly! I should be unworthy to live, if I did not earnestly endeavour to restore your happiness. You have given me a noble education, and I trust I shall not disgrace it. If you will recommend me, and give me a character, I fear not to make my own fortune. The Baron wiped his eyes; I wish to do this, my child, but in what way?—My Lord, said Edmund, I will open my heart to you. I have served with credit in the army, and I should prefer a soldier's life.—You please me well, said the Baron: I will send you to France, and give you a recommendation to the Regent; he knows you personally, and will prefer you, for my sake, and for your own merit.—My Lord, you overwhelm me with your goodness! I am but your creature, and my life shall be devoted to your service.—But, said the Baron, how to dispose of

you

you till the spring?—That, said Oswald, may be thought of at leisure; I am glad that you have resolved, and I congratulate you both. The Baron put an end to the conversation by desiring Edmund to go with him into the Menage to see his horses. He ordered Oswald to acquaint his son William with all that had passed, and to try to persuade the young men to meet Edmund and William at dinner.

The Baron took Edmund with him into his Menage to see some horses he had lately purchased; while they were examining the beauties and defects of these noble and useful animals, Edmund declared that he preferred Caradoc, a horse he had broke himself, to any other in my Lord's stables. Then, said the Baron, I will give him to you; and you shall go upon him to seek your fortune. He made new acknowledgments for this gift, and declared he would prize it highly for the giver's sake. But I shall not part with you yet, said my Lord; I will first carry all my points with these saucy boys, and oblige them to do you justice.—You have already done that, said Edmund; and I will not suffer any of your Lordship's blood to undergo any farther humiliation

miliation upon my account. I think, with humble submission to your better judgment, the sooner I go hence the better.

While they were speaking, Oswald came to them, and said, that the young men had absolutely refused to dine at the table, if Edmund was present.—'Tis well, said the Baron; I shall find a way to punish their contumacy hereafter: I will make them know that I am the master here. Edmund and you, Oswald, shall spend the day in my apartment above stairs. William shall dine with me alone; and I will acquaint him with our determination: My son Robert, and his cabal, shall be prisoners in the great parlour. Edmund shall, according to his own desire, spend this and the following night in the haunted apartment; and this for his sake, and my own; for if I should now contradict my former orders, it would subject us both to their impertinent reflections.

He then took Oswald aside, and charged him not to let Edmund go out of his sight; for if he should come in the way of those implacable enemies, he trembled for the consequences. He then walked back to the

stables,

ftables, and the two friends returned into the houfe.

They had a long converfation on various fubjects; in the courfe of it, Edmund acquainted Ofwald with all that had paffed between him and Jofeph the preceding night, the curiofity he had raifed in him, and his promife to gratify it the night following. I wifh, faid Ofwald, you would permit me to be one of your party.—How can that be? faid Edmund: we fhall be watched, perhaps; and, if difcovered, what excufe can you make for coming there? Befide, if it were known, I fhall be branded with the imputation of cowardice; and, though I have borne much, I will not promife to bear that patiently.—Never fear, replied Ofwald, I will fpeak to Jofeph about it; and, after prayers are over, and the family gone to bed, I will fteal away from my own chamber and come to you. I am ftrongly interefted in your affairs; and I cannot be eafy unlefs you will receive me into your company; I will bind myfelf to fecrefy in any manner you fhall enjoin.—Your word is fufficient, faid Edmund; I have as much reafon to truft you, father, as any man living; I fhould be ungrateful to refufe you

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any thing in my power to grant: But ſuppoſe the apartment ſhould really be haunted, would you have reſolution enough to purſue the adventure to a diſcovery?—I hope ſo, ſaid Oſwald: But have you any reaſon to believe it is?—I have, ſaid Edmund; but I have not opened my lips upon this ſubject to any creature but yourſelf. This night I purpoſe, if Heaven permit, to go all over the rooms; and, though I had formed this deſign, I will confeſs that your company will ſtrengthen my reſolution. I will have no reſerves to you in any reſpect; but I muſt put a ſeal upon your lips. Oſwald ſwore ſecreſy till he ſhould be permitted to diſcloſe the myſteries of that apartment; and both of them waited, in ſolemn expectation, the event of the approaching night.

In the afternoon Mr. William was allowed to viſit his friend: An affecting interview paſſed between them: He lamented the neceſſity of Edmund's departure, and they took a ſolemn leave of each other, as if they foreboded it would be long ere they ſhould meet again.

About the ſame hour as the preceding evening, Joſeph came to conduct Edmund to his

his apartment. You will find better accommodations than you had last night, said he, and all by my Lord's own order.——I every hour receive some new proof of his goodness, said Edmund. When they arrived, he found a good fire in the chamber, and a table covered with cold meats, and a flagon of strong beer. —Sit down and get your supper, my dear Master, said Joseph: I must attend my Lord; but as soon as the family are gone to bed, I will visit you again.—Do so, said Edmund; but first, see father Oswald; he has something to say to you; You may trust him, for I have no reserves to him.—Well, Sir, I will see him if you desire it; and I will come to you as soon as possible. So saying, he went his way; and Edmund sat down to supper.

After a moderate refreshment, he kneeled down, and prayed with the greatest fervency; he resigned himself to the disposal of Heaven; I am nothing, said he, I desire to be nothing but what thou, O Lord, pleasest to make me; If it is thy will that I should return to my former obscurity, be it obeyed with cheerfulness! and, if thou art pleased to exalt me, I will look up to thee, as the only fountain of

honour

honour and dignity. While he prayed, he felt an enlargement of heart beyond what he had ever experienced before; all idle fears were dispersed, and his heart glowed with divine love and affiance: He seemed raised above the world and all its pursuits. He continued wrapt up in mental devotion, till a knocking at the door obliged him to rise, and let in his two friends, who came without shoes, and on tiptoe, to visit him.

Save you, my son! said the friar; you look cheerful and happy.—I am so, father, said Edmund; I have resigned myself to the disposal of Heaven, and I find my heart strengthened above what I can express.—Heaven be praised! said Oswald: I believe you are designed for great things, my son.—What! do you too encourage my ambition? says Edmund; strange concurrence of circumstances! Sit down, my friends; and do you, my good Joseph, tell me the particulars you promised last night. They drew their chairs round the fire, and Joseph began as follows:——

You have heard of the untimely death of the late Lord Lovel, my noble and worthy Master; perhaps you may have also heard, that, from that time, this apartment was

haunted.

haunted. What paſſed the other day, when my Lord queſtioned you both on this head, brought all the circumſtances freſh into my mind. You then ſaid, there were ſuſpicions that he came not fairly to his end. I truſt you both, and will ſpeak what I know of it. There was a perſon ſuſpected of this murder; and whom do you think it was?—You muſt ſpeak out, ſaid Oſwald.—Why then, ſaid Joſeph, it was the preſent Lord Lovel.—You ſpeak my thoughts, ſaid Oſwald; but proceed to the proofs.—I will, ſaid Joſeph. From the time that my Lord's death was reported, there were ſtrange whiſperings and conſultations between the new Lord and ſome of the ſervants; there was a deal of private buſineſs carried on in this apartment: Soon after, they gave out that my poor Lady was diſtracted; but ſhe threw out ſtrong expreſſions that ſavoured nothing of madneſs: She ſaid, that the ghoſt of her departed Lord had appeared to her, and revealed the circumſtances of this murder. None of the ſervants, but one, were permitted to ſee her. At this very time, Sir Walter, the new Lord, had the cruelty to offer love to her; he urged her to marry him; and one of her women overheard

her

her ſay, ſhe would ſooner die than give her hand to the man who cauſed the death of her Lord: Soon after this, we were told my Lady was dead. The Lord Lovel made a public and ſumptuous funeral for her.—That is true, ſaid Oſwald; for I was a novice, and aſſiſted at it.

Well, ſays Joſeph, now comes my part of the ſtory. As I was coming home from the burial, I overtook Roger, our ploughman. Said he, What think you of this burying? What ſhould I think, ſaid I, but that we have loſt the beſt Maſter and Lady that we ſhall ever know? God he knows, quoth Roger, whether they be living or dead; but if ever I ſaw my Lady in my life, I ſaw her alive the night they ſay ſhe died. I tried to convince him that he was miſtaken; but he offered to take his oath, that the very night they ſaid ſhe died, he ſaw her come out at the garden-gate into the fields; that ſhe often ſtopped, like a perſon in pain, and then went forward again until he loſt ſight of her. Now it is certain that her time was out, and ſhe expect-ed to lie down every day; and they did not pretend that ſhe died in child-bed. I thought upon what I heard; but nothing I ſaid.

Roger

Roger told the same story to another servant; so he was called to an account; the story was hushed up, and the foolish fellow said, he was verily persuaded it was her ghost that he saw. Now you must take notice that, from this time, they began to talk about, that this apartment was troubled; and not only this, but at last the new Lord could not sleep in quiet in his own room; and this induced him to sell the castle to his brother-in-law, and get out of this country as fast as possible. He took most of the servants away with him, and Roger among the rest. As for me, they thought I knew nothing, and so they left me behind; but I was neither blind nor deaf, though I could hear, and see, and say nothing.

This is a dark story, said Oswald.—It is so, said Edmund; but why should Joseph seem to think it concerns me in particular?—Ah, dear Sir! said Joseph, I must tell you, though I never uttered it to mortal man before, the striking resemblance this young man bears to my dear Lord, the strange dislike his reputed father took to him, his gentle manners, his generous heart, his noble qualities so uncommon in those of his birth and breeding,

breeding, the ſound of his voice—You may ſmile at the ſtrength of my fancy, but I cannot put it out of my mind but that he is my own Maſter's ſon.

At theſe words Edmund changed colour, and trembled; he clapped his hand upon his breaſt, and looked up to Heaven in ſilence; his dream recurred to his memory, and ſtruck upon his heart. He related it to his attentive auditors. The ways of Providence are wonderful, ſaid Oſwald. If this be ſo, Heaven in its own time will make it appear.

Here a ſilence of ſeveral minutes enſued; when, ſuddenly, they were awakened from their reverie by a violent noiſe in the rooms underneath them. It ſeemed like the claſhing of arms, and ſomething ſeemed to fall down with violence.

They ſtarted, and Edmund roſe up with a look full of reſolution and intrepidity.—I am called, ſaid he; I obey the call! He took up a lamp, and went to the door that he had opened the night before. Oſwald followed with his roſary in his hand, and Joſeph laſt with trembling ſteps. The door opened with eaſe, and they deſcended the ſtairs in profound ſilence.

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The lower rooms anſwered exactly to thoſe above; there were two parlours and a large cloſet. They ſaw nothing remarkable in theſe rooms, except two pictures, that were turned with their faces to the wall. Joſeph took the courage to turn them: Theſe, ſaid he, are the portraits of my Lord and Lady.—Father, look at this face; do you know who is like it? —I ſhould think, ſaid Oſwald, it was done for Edmund!—I am, ſaid Edmund, ſtruck with the reſemblance myſelf: But let us go on; I feel myſelf inſpired with unuſual courage.—Let us open the cloſet-door.— Oſwald ſtopped him ſhort:—Take heed, ſaid he, leſt the wind of the door put out the lamp. I will open this door. He attempted it without ſucceſs; Joſeph did the ſame, but to no purpoſe: Edmund gave the lamp to Joſeph; he approached the door, tried the key, and it gave way to his hand in a moment.—This adventure belongs, ſaid he, to me only; that is plain; bring the lamp forward. Oſwald repeated his paternoſter, in which they all joined, and then entered the cloſet.

The firſt thing that preſented itſelf to their view, was a complete ſuit of armour, that ſeemed to have fallen down on an heap. Behold!

hold! ſaid Edmund; this made the noiſe we heard above. They took it up, and examined it piece by piece; the inſide of the breaſt-plate was ſtained with blood.—See here! ſaid Edmund; what think you of this?—'Tis my Lord's armour, ſaid Joſeph; I know it well: Here has been bloody work in this cloſet! Going forward, he ſtumbled over ſomething; it was a ring, with the arms of Lovel engraved upon it.—This is my Lord's ring, ſaid Joſeph; I have ſeen him wear it: I give it to you, Sir, as the right owner; and moſt religiouſly do I believe you his ſon.—Heaven only knows that, ſaid Edmund; and, if it permits, I will know who was my father before I am a day older. While he was ſpeaking, he ſhifted his ground, and perceived that the boards roſe up on the other ſide of the cloſet; upon farther examination they found that the whole floor was looſe, and a table that ſtood over them concealed the circumſtance from a caſual obſerver.—I perceive, ſaid Oſwald, that ſome great diſcovery is at hand.—God defend us! ſaid Edmund, but I verily believe that the perſon that ownd this armour lies buried under us. Upon this, a diſmal hollow groan was heard, as if from un-

 derneath.

derneath. A solemn silence ensued, and marks of fear were visible upon all three; the groan was thrice heard: Oswald made signs for them to kneel, and he prayed audibly, that Heaven would direct them how to act; he also prayed for the soul of the departed, that it might rest in peace. After this, he arose; but Edmund continued kneeling: He vowed solemnly to devote himself to the discovery of this secret, and the avenging the death of the person there buried. He then rose up.—It would be to no purpose, said he, for us to examine further now; when I am properly authorised, I will have this place opened: I trust that time is not far off.—I believe it, said Oswald; you are designed by Heaven to be its instrument in bringing this deed of darkness to light. We are your creatures; only tell us what you would have us do, and we are ready to obey your commands.—I only demand your silence, said Edmund, till I call for your evidence; and then, you must speak all you know, and all you suspect.—Oh, said Joseph, that I may but live to see that day, and I shall have lived long enough!—Come, said Edmund, let us return up stairs, and we will consult further how I shall proceed: So saying,

saying, he went out of the closet, and they followed him. He locked the door, and took the key out:—I will keep this, said he, till I have power to use it to purpose, lest any one should presume to pry into the secret of this closet: I will always carry it about me, to remind me of what I have undertaken.

Upon this, they returned up stairs into the bed-chamber; all was still, and they heard nothing more to disturb them. How, said Edmund, is it possible that I should be the son of Lord Lovel? for, however circumstances have seemed to encourage such a notion, what reason have I to believe it?—I am strangely puzzled about it, said Oswald. It seems unlikely that so good a man as Lord Lovel should corrupt the wife of a peasant, his vassal: and, especially, being so lately married to a Lady with whom he was passionately in love. —Hold there! said Joseph; my Lord was incapable of such an action: If Master Edmund is the son of my Lord, he is also the son of my Lady.—How can that be? said Edmund.—I don't know how, said Joseph; but there is a person who can tell if she will: I mean Margery Twyford, who calls herself your mother.—You meet my thoughts, said

Edmund; I had refolved, before you fpoke, to vifit her, and to interrogate her on the fubject: I will afk my Lord's permiffion to go this very day.—That is right, faid Ofwald; but be cautious and prudent in your inquiries.—If you, faid Edmund, would bear me company, I fhould do better; fhe might think herfelf obliged to anfwer your queftions; and, being lefs interefted in the event, you would be more difcreet in your interrogations.—That I will moft readily, faid he; and I will afk my Lord's permiffion for us both.—This point is well determined, faid Jofeph; I am impatient for the refult; and I believe my feet will carry me to meet you whether I confent or not.—I am as impatient as you, faid Ofwald; but let us be filent as the grave, and let not a word or look indicate any thing knowing or myfterious.

The day-light began to dawn upon their conference; and Edmund, obferving it, begged his friends to withdraw in filence. They did fo, and left Edmund to his own recollections. His thoughts were too much employed for fleep to approach him; he threw himfelf upon the bed, and lay meditating how he fhould proceed; a thoufand fchemes offered

themſelves, and were rejected: But he reſolved, at all events, to leave Baron Fitz-Owen's family the firſt opportunity that preſented itſelf.

He was ſummoned, as before, to attend my Lord at breakfaſt; during which, he was ſilent, abſent, and reſerved. My Lord obſerved it, and rallied him; inquiring how he had ſpent the night?—In reflecting upon my ſituation, my Lord; and in laying plans for my future conduct. Oſwald took the hint, and aſked permiſſion to viſit Edmund's mother in his company, and acquaint her with his intentions of leaving the country ſoon. He conſented freely; but ſeemed unreſolved about Edmund's departure.

They ſet out directly, and Edmund went haſtily to old Twyford's cottage, declaring that every field ſeemed a mile to him. Reſtrain your warmth, my ſon, ſaid Oſwald; compoſe your mind, and recover your breath, before you enter upon a buſineſs of ſuch conſequence. Margery met them at the door, and aſked Edmund what wind blew him thither?—Is it ſo very ſurpriſing, ſaid he, that I ſhould viſit my parents?—Yes, it is, ſaid ſhe, conſidering the treatment you have met with from us;

 but

but since Andrew is not in the house, I may say I am glad to see you: Lord bless you, what a fine youth you be grown! 'Tis a long time since I saw you; but that is not my fault: Many a cross word, and many a blow, have I had on your account; but I may now venture to embrace my dear child.— Edmund came forward and embraced her fervently; the starting tears, on both sides, evinced their affection. And why, said he, should my father forbid you to embrace your child? what have I ever done to deserve his hatred?—Nothing, my dear boy! you were always good and tender-hearted, and deserved the love of every body.—It is not common, said Edmund, for a parent to hate his first-born son without his having deserved it.— That is true, said Oswald; it is uncommon, it is unnatural; nay, I am of opinion it is almost impossible. I am so convinced of this truth, that I believe the man who thus hates and abuses Edmund, cannot be his father. In saying this, he observed her countenance attentively; she changed colour apparently. —Come, said he, let us sit down; and do you, Margery, answer to what I have said.— Blessed Virgin! said Margery, what does



your

your Reverence mean? what do you ſuſpect?—I ſuſpect, ſaid he, that Edmund is not the ſon of Andrew your huſband.—Lord bleſs me! ſaid ſhe, what is it you do ſuſpect?—Do not evade my queſtion, woman! I am come here by authority to examine you upon this point. The woman trembled every joint:—Would to Heaven! ſaid ſhe, that Andrew was at home!—It is much better as it is, ſaid Oſwald: You are the perſon we are to examine.—Oh, father, ſaid ſhe, do you think that I—that I—that I am to blame in this matter? what have I done?—Do you, Sir, ſaid he, aſk your own queſtions. Upon this, Edmund threw himſelf at her feet, and embraced her knees.—Oh my mother! ſaid he, for as ſuch my heart owns you, tell me for the love of Heaven! tell me, who was my father?—Gracious Heaven! ſaid ſhe, what will become of me?—Woman! ſaid Oſwald, confeſs the truth, or you ſhall be compelled to do it: By whom had you this youth?—Who, I? ſaid ſhe; I had him! No, father, I am not guilty of the black crime of adultery; God he knows my innocence! I am not worthy to be the mother of ſuch a ſweet youth as that is.—You are not his

mother, then, nor Andrew his father?—Oh, what ſhall I do? ſaid Margery; Andrew will be the death of me!—No, he ſhall not, ſaid Edmund; you ſhall be protected and rewarded for the diſcovery.—Goody, ſaid Oſwald, confeſs the whole truth, and I will protect you from harm and from blame; you may be the means of making Edmund's fortune, in which caſe he will certainly provide for you; on the other hand, by an obſtinate ſilence you will deprive yourſelf of all advantages you might receive from the diſcovery; and, beſide, you will ſoon be examined in a different manner, and be obliged to confeſs all you know, and nobody will thank you for it.—Ah! ſaid ſhe, but Andrew beat me the laſt time I ſpoke to Edmund; and told me he would break every bone in my ſkin, if ever I ſpoke to him again.—He knows it then? ſaid Oſwald—He know it! Lord help you, it was all his own doing.—Tell us then, ſaid Oſwald; for Andrew ſhall never know it, till it is out of his power to puniſh you.—'Tis a long ſtory, ſaid ſhe, and cannot be told in a few words.—It will never be told at this rate, ſaid he; ſit down and begin it inſtantly.—My fate depends upon your words, ſaid Edmund;

mund; my ſoul is impatient of the ſuſpenſe! If ever you loved me and cheriſhed me, ſhew it now, and tell while I have breath to aſk it.

He ſat in extreme agitation of mind; his words and actions were equally expreſſive of his inward emotions.—I will, ſaid ſhe; but I muſt try to recollect all the circumſtances. You muſt know, young man, that you are juſt one-and-twenty years of age.—On what day was he born, ſaid Oſwald?—The day before yeſterday, ſaid ſhe, the 21ſt of September.—A remarkable æra, ſaid he.—'Tis ſo, indeed, ſaid Edmund: Oh, that night! that apartment!—Be ſilent, ſaid Oſwald; and do you, Margery, begin your ſtory.

I will, ſaid ſhe. Juſt one-and-twenty years ago, on that very day, I loſt my firſt-born ſon: I got a hurt by over-reaching myſelf, when I was near my time, and ſo the poor child died. And ſo, as I was ſitting all alone, and very melancholy, Andrew came home from work: See, Margery, ſaid he, I have brought you a child inſtead of that you have loſt. So he gave me a bundle, as I thought; but ſure enough it was a child; a poor helpleſs babe juſt born, and only rolled up in a fine handkerchief, and over that a rich velvet

cloak, trimmed with gold lace. And where did you find this? said I.—Upon the foot-bridge, said he, just below the clay field. This child, said he, belongs to some great folk, and perhaps it may be inquired after one day, and may make our fortunes; take care of it, said he, and bring it up as if it was your own. The poor infant was cold, and it cried, and looked up at me so pitifully, that I loved it; beside, my milk was trouble-some to me, and I was glad to be eased of it; so I gave it the breast, and from that hour I loved the child as if it were my own, and so I do still if I dared to own it.—And this is all you know of Edmund's birth? said Oswald. —No, not all, said Margery; but pray look out and see whether Andrew is coming, for I am all over in a twitter.——He is not, said Oswald; go on, I beseech you!—This happened, said she, as I told you, on the 21st. On the morrow, my Andrew went out early to work, along with one Robin Rouse, our neighbour; they had not been gone above an hour, when they both came back seemingly very much frightened: Says Andrew, Go you, Robin, and borrow a pick-axe at neighbour Styles's. What is the matter now? said

I—Matter enough! quoth Andrew; we may come to be hanged, perhaps, as many an innocent man has before us. Tell me what is the matter? said I. I will, said he; but if ever you open your mouth about it, woe be to you! I never will, said I: But he made me swear by all the blessed Saints in the Calendar; and then he told me, that, as Robin and he were going over the foot-bridge, where he found the child the evening before, they saw something floating upon the water; so they followed it, till it stuck against a stake, and found it to be the dead body of a woman: As sure as you are alive, Madge, said he, this was the mother of the child I brought home. —Merciful God! said Edmund; am I the child of that hapless mother?—Be composed, said Oswald: Proceed, good woman, the time is precious.—And so, continued she, Andrew told me they dragged the body out of the river, and it was richly dressed, and must be somebody of consequence. I suppose, said he, when the poor Lady had taken care of her child, she went to find some help; and, the night being dark, her foot slipped, and she fell into the river, and was drowned.

 Lord

Lord have mercy! ſaid Robin, what ſhall we do with the dead body? we may be taken up for the murder; what had we to do to meddle with it? Aye, but, ſays Andrew, we muſt have ſomething to do with it now; and our wiſeſt way is to bury it. Robin was ſadly frightened, but at laſt they agreed to carry it into the wood, and bury it there; ſo they came home for a pick-axe and ſhovel. Well, ſaid I, Andrew, but will you bury all the rich clothes you ſpeak of? Why, ſaid he, it would be both a ſin and a ſhame to ſtrip the dead. So it would, ſaid I; but I will give you a ſheet to wrap the body in, and you may take off her upper garments, and any thing of value; but do not ſtrip her to the ſkin for any thing. Well ſaid, wench! ſaid he; I will do as you ſay. So I fetched a ſheet, and by that time Robin was come back, and away they went together.

They did not come back again till noon, and then they ſat down and ate a morſel together. Says Andrew, Now we may ſit down and eat in peace. Aye, ſays Robin, and ſleep in peace too, for we have done no harm. No, to be ſure, ſaid I; but yet I am much concerned that the poor Lady had not Chriſtian

burial.

burial. Never trouble thyſelf about that, ſaid Andrew; we have done the beſt we could for her: But let us ſee what we have got in our bags; we muſt divide them. So they opened their bags, and took out a fine gown and a pair of rich ſhoes; but, beſides theſe, there was a fine necklace with a golden locket, and a pair of ear-rings. Says Andrew, and winked at me, I will have theſe, and you may take the reſt. Robin ſaid, he was ſatisfied, and ſo he went his way. When he was gone, Here, you fool, ſays Andrew, take theſe, and keep them as ſafe as the bud of your eye: If ever young Maſter is found, theſe will make our fortune.—And have you them now? ſaid Oſwald.—Yes, that I have, anſwered ſhe; Andrew would have ſold them long ago, but I always put him off it.—Heaven be praiſed! ſaid Edmund.—Huſh, ſaid Oſwald, let us not loſe time; proceed, Goody!—Nay, ſaid Margery, I have not much more to ſay. We looked every day to hear ſome inquiries after the child, but nothing paſſed, nobody was miſſing.—Did nobody of note die about that time? ſaid Oſwald.——Why yes, ſaid Margery, the widow Lady Lovel died that ſame week: By the

ſame

fame token; Andrew went to the funeral, and brought home a 'fcutcheon, which I keep unto this day.—Very well; go on.—My hufband behaved well enough to the boy, till fuch time as he had two or three children of his own; and then he began to grumble, and fay, it was hard to maintain other folks' children, when he found it hard enough to keep his own: I loved the boy quite as well as my own; often and often have I pacified Andrew, and made him to hope that he fhould one day or other be paid for his trouble; but at laft he grew out of patience, and gave over all hopes of that kind.

As Edmund grew up, he grew fickly and tender, and could not bear hard labour; and that was another reafon why my hufband could not bear with him. If, quoth he, the boy could earn his living, I did not care; but I muft bear all the expence. There came an old pilgrim into our parts; he was a fcholar, and had been a foldier, and he taught Edmund to read; then he told him hiftories of wars, and Knights, and Lords, and great men; and Edmund took fuch delight in hearing him, that he would not take to any thing elfe.

To

To be sure, Edwin was a pleasant companion; he would tell old stories, and sing old songs, that one could have sat all night to hear him; but, as I was a saying, Edmund grew more and more fond of reading, and less of work; however, he would run of errands, and do many handy turns for the neighbours; and he was so courteous a lad, that people took notice of him. Andrew once catched him alone reading, and then told him, that if he did not find some way to earn his bread, he would turn him out of doors in a very short time; and so he would have done, sure enough, if my Lord Fitz-Owen had not taken him into his service just in the nick.

Very well, Goody, said Oswald; you have told your story very well; I am glad, for Edmund's sake, that you can do it so properly: But now, can you keep a secret?—Why, an't please your Reverence, I think I have shewed you that I can.—But can you keep it from your husband?—Aye, said she, surely I can; for I dare not tell it him.—That is a good security, said he; but I must have a better: You must swear upon this book not to disclose any thing that has passed between us three, till we desire you to do it. Be assured

you will soon be called upon for this purpose; Edmund's birth is near the discovery; He is the son of parents of high degree; and it will be in his power to make your fortune, when he takes possession of his own.

Holy Virgin! what is it you tell me? How you rejoice me to hear, that what I have so long prayed for will come to pass! She took the oath required, saying after Oswald.—Now, said he, go and fetch the tokens you have mentioned.

When she was gone, Edmund's passions, long suppressed, broke out in tears and exclamations; he kneeled down, and, with his hands clasped together, returned thanks to Heaven for the discovery. Oswald begged him to be composed, lest Margery should perceive his agitation, and misconstrue the cause. She soon returned with the necklace and earrings: They were pearls of great value; and the necklace had a locket, on which the cypher of Lovel was engraved.—This, said Oswald, is indeed a proof of consequence: Keep it, Sir, for it belongs to you.—Must he take it away? said she.—Certainly, returned Oswald; we can do nothing without it: But if Andrew should ask for it, you must put him

off

off for the preſent, and hereafter he will find his account in it. Margery conſented reluctantly to part with the jewels; and, after ſome further converſation, they took leave of her. Edmund embraced her affectionately. —I thank you with my whole heart, ſaid he, for all your goodneſs to me! Though I confeſs, I never felt much regard for your huſband, yet for you I had always the tender affection of a ſon. You will, I truſt, give your evidence in my behalf when called upon; and I hope it will one day be in my power to reward your kindneſs: In that caſe, I will own you as my foſter-mother, and you ſhall always be treated as ſuch. Margery wept.—The Lord grant it! ſaid ſhe; and I pray him to have you in his holy keeping. Farewell, my dear child!—Oſwald deſired them to ſeparate for fear of intruſion; and they returned to the Caſtle. Margery ſtood at the door of her cottage, looking every way to ſee if the coaſt was clear.

Now, Sir, ſaid Oſwald, I congratulate you as the ſon of Lord and Lady Lovel; the proofs are ſtrong and indiſputable.—To us they are ſo, ſaid Edmund; but how ſhall we make them ſo to others? and what are we to

think

think of the funeral of Lady Lovel?—As of a fiction, said Oswald; the work of the present Lord, to secure his title and fortune.—And what means can we use to dispossess him? said Edmund: He is not a man for a poor youth like me to contend with.—Doubt not, said Oswald, but Heaven, who has evidently conducted you by the hand thus far, will complete its own work; for my part, I can only wonder and adore!—Give me your advice then, said Edmund; for Heaven assists us by natural means.

It seems to me, said Oswald, that your first step must be to make a friend of some great man, of consequence enough to espouse your cause, and to get this affair examined into by authority. Edmund started and crossed himself; he suddenly exclaimed—A friend! Yes; I have a friend! a powerful one too; one sent by Heaven to be my protector, but whom I have too long neglected.—Who can that be? said Oswald.—Who should it be, said Edmund, but that good Sir Philip Harclay, the chosen friend of him, whom I shall from henceforward call my father.—'Tis true, indeed, said Oswald; and this is a fresh proof of what I before observed, that Heaven assists you, and

will

will complete its own work.—I think so myself, said Edmund, and rely upon its direction. I have already determined on my future conduct, which I will communicate to you. My first step shall be to leave the Castle. My Lord has this day given me a horse, upon which I purpose to set out this very night, without the knowledge of any of the family. I will go to Sir Philip Harclay; I will throw myself at his feet, relate my strange story, and implore his protection: With him I will consult on the most proper way of bringing this murderer to public justice; and I will be guided by his advice and direction in every thing.—Nothing can be better, said Oswald, than what you propose; but give me leave to offer an addition to your scheme. You shall set off in the dead of night, as you intend; Joseph, and I, will favour your departure in such a manner as to throw a mystery over the circumstances of it: Your disappearing at such a time from the haunted apartment, will terrify and confound all the family; they will puzzle themselves in vain to account for it, and they will be afraid to pry into the secrets of that place.

You

You ſay well; and I approve your addition, replied Edmund. Suppoſe, likewiſe, there was a letter written in a myſterious manner, and dropt in my Lord's way, or ſent to him afterwards; it would forward our deſign, and frighten them away from that apartment.—That ſhall be my care, ſaid Oſwald; and I will warrant you that they will not find themſelves diſpoſed to inhabit it preſently.—But how ſhall I leave my dear friend Mr. William, without a word of notice of this ſeparation?—I have thought of that too, ſaid Oſwald; and I will ſo manage, as to acquaint him with it in ſuch a manner as he ſhall think out of the common courſe of things, and which ſhall make him wonder and be ſilent.—How will you do that, ſaid Edmund?—I will tell you hereafter, ſaid Oſwald; for here comes old Joſeph to meet us.

He came, indeed, as faſt as his age would permit him. As ſoon as he was within hearing, he aſked them what news? They related all that had paſſed at Twyford's cottage; he heard them with the greateſt eagerneſs of attention, and as ſoon as they came to the great event—I knew it! I knew it! exclaimed Joſeph! I was ſure it would prove ſo! Thank

Thank God for it! But I will be the first to acknowledge my young Lord, and I will live and die his faithful servant! Here Joseph attempted to kneel to him, but Edmund prevented him with a warm embrace: My friend! my dear friend! said he, I cannot suffer a man of your age to kneel to me? are you not one of my best and truest friends? I will ever remember your disinterested affection for me; and if Heaven restores me to my rights, it shall be one of my first cares to render your old age easy and happy. Joseph wept over him, and it was some time before he could utter a word.

Oswald gave them both time to recover their emotion, by acquainting Joseph with Edmund's scheme for his departure. Joseph wiped his eyes and spoke.—I have thought, said he, of something that will be both agreeable and useful to my dear master. John Wyatt, Sir Philip Harclay's servant, is now upon a visit at his father's; I have heard that he goes home soon; now he would be both a guide, and companion, on the way.—That is, indeed, a happy circumstance, said Edmund; but how shall we know certainly the time of his departure?—Why, Sir, I will

go

go to him, and inquire; and bring you word directly.—Do so, said Edmund, and you will oblige me greatly.—But, Sir, said Oswald, I think it will be best not to let John Wyatt know who is to be his companion; only let Joseph tell him that a gentleman is going to visit his Master: And, if possible, prevail upon him to set out this night.—Do so, my good friend, said Edmund; and tell him, further, that this person has business of great consequence to communicate to his Master, and cannot delay his journey on any account.—I will do this, you may depend, said Joseph, and acquaint you with my success as soon as possible; but, Sir, you must not go without a guide, at any rate.—I trust I shall not, said Edmund, though I go alone; he that has received such a call as I have, can want no other, nor fear any danger.

They conversed on these points till they drew near the Castle, when Joseph left them to go on his errand, and Edmund attended his Lord at dinner. The Baron observed that he was silent and reserved; the conversation languished on both sides. As soon as dinner was ended, Edmund asked permission to go up into his own apartment; where he packed

packed up ſome neceſſaries, and made a haſty preparation for his departure.

Afterwards he walked into the garden, revolving in his mind the peculiarity of his ſituation, and the uncertainty of his future proſpects; loſt in thought, he walked to and fro in a covered walk, with his arms croſſed and his eyes caſt down, without perceiving that he was obſerved by two females who ſtood at a diſtance watching his motions: It was the Lady Emma, and her attendant, who were thus engaged. At length, he lifted up his eyes and ſaw them; he ſtood ſtill, and was irreſolute whether to advance or retire: They approached him; and, as they drew near, fair Emma ſpoke.—You have been ſo wrapt in meditation, Edmund, that I am apprehenſive of ſome new vexation that I am yet a ſtranger to: Would it were in my power to leſſen thoſe you have already! But tell me if I gueſs truly? He ſtood ſtill irreſolute, he anſwered with heſitation.—Oh, Lady—I am—I am grieved, I am concerned, to be the cauſe of ſo much confuſion in this noble family, to which I am ſo much indebted: I ſee no way to leſſen theſe evils but to remove the cauſe of them.—Meaning yourſelf! ſaid ſhe.



—Certainly,

—Certainly, Madam; and I was meditating on my departure.—But, ſaid ſhe, by your departure you will not remove the cauſe.—How ſo, Madam?—Becauſe you are not the cauſe, but thoſe you will leave behind you.—Lady Emma!—How can you affect this ignorance, Edmund? You know well enough it is that odious Wenlock, your enemy and my averſion, that has cauſed all this miſchief among us, and will much more, if he is not removed.—This, Madam, is a ſubject that it becomes me to be ſilent upon: Mr. Wenlock is your kinſman; he is not my friend; and for that reaſon I ought not to ſpeak againſt him, nor you to hear it from me: If he has uſed me ill, I am recompenſed by the generous treatment of my Lord your father, who is all that is great and good; he has allowed me to juſtify myſelf to him, and he has reſtored me to his good opinion, which I prize among the beſt gifts of heaven: Your amiable brother William thinks well of me, and his eſteem is infinitely dear to me; and you, excellent Lady, permit me to hope that you honour me with your good opinion: Are not theſe ample amends for the ill-will Mr. Wenlock bears me?—My opinion of you,

Edmund, said she, is fixed and settled: It is not founded upon events of yesterday, but upon long knowledge and experience; upon your whole conduct and character.—You honour me, Lady! Continue to think well of me, it will excite me to deserve it. When I am far distant from this place, the remembrance of your goodness will be a cordial to my heart.—But why will you leave us, Edmund? Stay and defeat the designs of your enemy; you shall have my wishes and assistance.—Pardon me, Madam, that is among the things I cannot do, even if it were in my power, which it is not. Mr. Wenlock loves you, Lady, and if he is so unhappy as to be your aversion, that is a punishment severe enough. For the rest, I may be unfortunate by the wickedness of others, but if I am unworthy, it must be by my own fault.—So then you think it is an unworthy action to oppose Mr. Wenlock? Very well, Sir; Then I suppose you wish him success; you wish that I may be married to him?—I, Madam! said Edmund, confused; what am I, that I should give my opinion on an affair of so much consequence? You distress me by the question. May you be happy! may

 you

your enjoy your own wiſhes! He ſighed, he turned away. She called him back; he trembled, and kept ſilence.

She ſeemed to enjoy his confuſion; ſhe was cruel enough to repeat the queſtion.—Tell me, Edmund, and truly, do you wiſh to ſee me give my hand to Wenlock? I inſiſt upon your anſwer. All on a ſudden he recovered both his voice and courage; he ſtepped forward, his perſon erect, his countenance aſſured, his voice reſolute and intrepid.—Since Lady Emma inſiſts upon my anſwer, ſince ſhe avows a diſlike to Wenlock, ſince ſhe condeſcends to aſk my opinion, I will tell her my thoughts, my wiſhes. The fair Emma now trembled in her turn; ſhe bluſhed, looked down, and was aſhamed to have ſpoken ſo freely. Edmund went on: —My moſt ardent wiſhes are, that the fair Emma may reſerve her heart and hand till a certain perſon, a friend of mine, is at liberty to ſolicit them; whoſe utmoſt ambition is, firſt to deſerve, and then to obtain them.—Your friend, Sir! ſaid Lady Emma! her brow clouded, her eye diſdainful. Edmund proceeded:—My friend is ſo particularly circumſtanced that he cannot at preſent, with

propriety,

propriety, aſk for Lady Emma's favour; but as ſoon as he has gained a cauſe that is yet in ſuſpence, he will openly declare his pretenſions, and if he is unſucceſsful, he will then condemn himſelf to eternal ſilence. Lady Emma knew not what to think of this declaration; ſhe hoped, ſhe feared, ſhe meditated; but her attention was too ſtrongly excited to be ſatisfied without ſome gratification: After a pauſe, ſhe purſued the ſubject.—And this friend of yours, Sir, of what degree and fortune is he? Edmund ſmiled; but, commanding his emotion, he replied, his birth is noble, his degree and fortune uncertain. Her countenance fell, ſhe ſighed; he proceeded. —It is utterly impoſſible, ſaid he, for any man of inferior degree to aſpire to Lady Emma's favour; her noble birth, the dignity of her beauty and virtues, muſt awe and keep at their proper diſtance all men of inferior degree and merit; they may admire, they may revere; but they muſt not preſume to approach too near, leſt their preſumption ſhould meet with its puniſhment.—Well, Sir, ſaid ſhe, ſuddenly; and ſo this friend of yours has commiſſioned you to ſpeak in his behalf?—He has, Madam.—Then I muſt tell you, that

I think his assurance is very great, and yours not much less.—I am sorry for that, Madam. —Tell him, that I shall reserve my heart and hand for the man to whom my father shall bid me give them.—Very well, Lady; I am certain my Lord loves you too well to dispose of them against your inclination.—How do you know that, Sir? But tell him, that the man that hopes for my favour must apply to my Lord for his.—That is my friend's intention, his resolution I should say, as soon as he can do it with propriety; and I accept your permission for him to do so.—My permission, did you say? I am astonished at your assurance! tell me no more of your friend: But perhaps you are pleading for Wenlock all this time: It is all one to me; only, say no more.—Are you offended with me, Madam?—No matter, Sir.—Yes, it is.—I am surprised at you, Edmund;—I am surprised at my own temerity; but forgive me.—It does not signify; good bye t'ye, Sir.—Don't leave me in anger, Madam; I cannot bear that: Perhaps I may not see you again for a long time. He looked afflicted; she turned back. —I do forgive you, Edmund: I was concerned for you; but, it seems, you are more concerned

concerned for every body than for yourself. She sighed; Farewell! said she. Edmund gazed on her with tenderness; he approached her, he just touched her hand; his heart was rising to his lips, but he recollected his situation; he checked himself immediately; he retired back, he sighed deeply, bowed low, and hastily quitted her.

The Lady turning into another walk, he reached the house first, and went up again to his chamber; he threw himself upon his knees; prayed for a thousand blessings upon every one of the family of his benefactor, and involuntarily wept at mentioning the name of the charming Emma, whom he was about to leave abruptly, and perhaps for ever. He then endeavoured to compose himself, and once more attended the Baron; wished him a good night; and withdrew to his chamber, till he was called upon to go again to the haunted apartment.

He came down equipped for his journey, and went hastily for fear of observation; he paid his customary devotions, and soon after Oswald tapped at the door. They conferred together upon the interesting subject that engrossed their attention, until Joseph came to

 them;

them; who brought the reſt of Edmund's baggage, and ſome refreſhment for him before he ſet out. Edmund promiſed to give them the earlieſt information of his ſituation and ſucceſs. At the hour of twelve they heard the ſame groans as the night before in the lower apartment; but, being ſomewhat familiarized to it, they were not ſo ſtrongly affected: Oſwald croſſed himſelf, and prayed for the departed ſoul; he alſo prayed for Edmund, and recommended him to the divine protection: He then aroſe, and embraced that young man; who, alſo, took a tender leave of his friend Joſeph. They then went, with ſilence and caution, through a long gallery; they deſcended the ſtairs in the ſame manner; they croſſed the hall in profound ſilence, and hardly dared to breathe, leſt they ſhould be overheard: They found ſome difficulty in opening one of the folding doors, which at laſt they accompliſhed; they were again in jeopardy at the outward gate; at length they conveyed him ſafely into the ſtables: There they again embraced him, and prayed for his proſperity.

He then mounted his horſe, and ſet forward to Wyatt's cottage; he hallooed at the door,

door, and was anſwered from within: In a few minutes John came out to him.—What, is it you, Maſter Edmund?—Huſh! ſaid he; not a word of who I am: I go upon private buſineſs, and would not wiſh to be known. —If you will go forward Sir, I will ſoon overtake you: He did ſo; and they purſued their journey to the north. In the mean time, Oſwald and Joſeph returned in ſilence into the houſe; they retired to their reſpective apartments without hearing or being heard by any one.

About the dawn of day Oſwald intended to lay his packets in the way of thoſe to whom they were addreſſed; after much contrivance he determined to take a bold ſtep, and, if he were diſcovered, to frame ſome excuſe. Encouraged by his late ſucceſs, he went on tip-toe into Maſter William's chamber, placed a letter upon his pillow, and withdrew unheard. Exulting in his heart, he attempted the Baron's apartment, but found it faſtened within; finding this ſcheme frustrated, he waited till the hour the Baron was expected down to breakfaſt, and laid the letter and the key of the haunted apartment upon the table.

Soon after, he saw the Baron enter the breakfast room; he got out of sight, but staid within call, preparing himself for a summons. The Baron sat down to breakfast; he saw a letter directed to himself, he opened it, and to his great surprise, read as follows:

"The guardian of the haunted apartment "to Baron Fitz-Owen. To thee I remit "the key of my charge, until the right owner "shall come, who will both discover and "avenge my wrongs; then, woe be to the "guilty! But let the innocent rest in peace. "In the mean time, let none presume to ex-"plore the secrets of my apartment, lest they "suffer for their temerity."

The Baron was struck with amazement at the letter: He took up the key, examined it, then laid it down, and took up the letter; he was in such confusion of thought, he knew not what to do or say for several minutes: At length he called his servants about him; the first question he asked was,——Where is Edmund?—They could not tell.—Has he been called?—Yes, my Lord, but nobody answered, and the key was not in the door.—Where is Joseph?—Gone into the stables.—Where is father Oswald?—In his study.—Seek him, and

and desire him to come hither. By the time the Baron had read the letter over again, he came.

He had been framing a steady countenance to answer to all interrogatories; as he came in he attentively observed the Baron, whose features were in strong agitation; as soon as he saw Oswald, he spoke as one out of breath. —Take that key, and read this letter!—He did so, shrugged up his shoulders, and remained silent.—Father, said my Lord, what think you of this letter?—It is a very surprising one.—The contents are alarming; where is Edmund?—I do not know.—Has nobody seen him?—Not that I know of.—Call my sons, my kinsmen, my servants.—The servants came in.—Have any of you seen or heard of Edmund?—No, was the answer.—Father, step up stairs to my sons and kinsmen, and desire them to come down immediately.

Oswald withdrew; and went first to Master William's chamber.—My dear Sir, you must come to my Lord now directly; he has something extraordinary to communicate to you.—And so have I, father; see what I have found upon my pillow!—Pray, Sir, read it to me before you shew it to any body; my

 Lord

Lord is alarmed too much already; and wants nothing to increase his consternation. William read his letter, while Oswald looked as if he was an utter stranger to the contents, which were these:——

"Whatever may be heard or seen, let the "seal of friendship be upon thy lips. The "peasant Edmund is no more: But there "still lives a man who hopes to acknow-"ledge, and repay, the Lord Fitz-Owen's "generous care and protection; to return "his beloved William's vowed affection, "and to claim his friendship on terms of "equality."

What, said William, can this mean?—It is not easy to say, replied Oswald.—Can you tell what is the cause of this alarm?—I can tell you nothing, but that my Lord desires to see you directly; pray make haste down; I must go up to your brothers and kinsmen: Nobody knows what to think, or believe.

Master William went down stairs, and father Oswald went to the malecontents: As soon as he entered the outward door of their apartment, Mr. Wenlock called out—Here comes the friend; now for some new proposal!—Gentlemen, said Oswald, my Lord

desires

desires your company immediately in the breakfast parlour.—What! to meet your favourite Edmund, I suppose? said Mr. Wenlock.—No, Sir.—What then, is the matter? said Sir Robert.—Something very extraordinary has happened, Gentlemen: Edmund is not to be found; he disappeared from the haunted apartment, the key of which was conveyed to my Lord in a strange manner, with a letter from an unknown hand: My Lord is both surprised and concerned, and wishes to have your opinion and advice on the occasion.—Tell him, said Sir Robert, we will wait upon him immediately.

As Oswald went away, he heard Wenlock say,—So Edmund is gone, it is no matter how, or whither.—Another said, I hope the ghost has taken him out of the way. The rest laughed at the conceit, as they followed Oswald down stairs.—They found the Baron, and his son William, commenting upon the key and the letter. My Lord gave them to Sir Robert, who looked on them with marks of surprise and confusion. The Baron addressed him:—Is not this a very strange affair? Son Robert, lay aside your ill humours, and behave to your father with the respect and

affection his tenderness deserves from you, and give me your advice and opinion on this alarming subject.—My Lord, said Sir Robert, I am as much confounded as yourself: I can give no advice: Let my cousins see the letter; let us have their opinion. They read it in turn; they were equally surprised: But when it came into Wenlock's hand, he paused and meditated some minutes; at length——I am indeed surprised, and still more concerned, to see my Lord and Uncle the dupe of an artful contrivance; and, if he will permit me, I shall endeavour to unriddle it, to the confusion of all that are concerned in it.—Do so, Dick, said my Lord, and you shall have my thanks for it.—This letter, said he, I imagine to be the contrivance of Edmund, or some ingenious friend of his, to conceal some designs they have against the peace of this family, which has been too often disturbed upon that rascal's account.—But what end could be proposed by it? said the Baron.—Why, one part of the scheme is to cover Edmund's departure, that is clear enough; for the rest, we can only guess at it: Perhaps he may be concealed somewhere in that apartment, from whence he may rush

out

out in the night, and either rob or murder us; or, at least, alarm and terrify the family. The Baron smiled:—You shoot beyond the mark, Sir, and overshoot yourself, as you have done before now; you shew only your inveteracy against that poor lad, whom you cannot mention with temper: To what purpose should he shut himself up there, to be starved?—Starved! no, no! he has friends in this house (looking at Oswald) who will not suffer him to want any thing: Those who have always magnified his virtues, and extenuated his faults, will lend a hand to help him in time of need; and, perhaps, to assist his ingenious contrivances. Oswald shrugged up his shoulders, and remained silent. ——This is a strange fancy of yours, Dick, said my Lord; but I am willing to pursue it; first, to discover what you drive at; and, secondly, to satisfy all that are here present of the truth or falsehood of it, that they may know what value to set upon your sagacity hereafter. Let us all go over that apartment together; and let Joseph be called to attend us thither. Oswald offered to call him, but Wenlock stopped him.—No, father, said he, you must stay with us; we want your ghostly counsel

counsel and advice: Joseph shall have no private conference with you.—What mean you, said Oswald, to insinuate to my Lord against me, or Joseph? But your ill-will spares nobody. It will one day be known who is the disturber of the peace of this family; I wait for that time, and am silent.

Joseph came; when he was told whither they were going, he looked hard at Oswald. Wenlock observed them:—Lead the way, father, said he; and Joseph shall follow us. Oswald smiled:—We will go where Heaven permits us, said he; alas! the wisdom of man can neither hasten, nor retard, its decrees.

They followed the father up stairs, and went directly to the haunted apartment. The Baron unlocked the door; he bid Joseph open the shutters, and admit the day-light, which had been excluded for many years. They went over the rooms above stairs, and then descended the staircase, and through the lower rooms in the same manner. However, they overlooked the closet, in which the fatal secret was concealed; the door was covered with tapestry, the same as the room, and united so well, that it seemed but one piece.

Wenlock

Wenlock tauntingly desired father Oswald to introduce them to the ghost. The father, in reply, asked them where they should find Edmund?—Do you think, said he, that he lies hid in my pocket, or in Joseph's?—'Tis no matter, answered he; thoughts are free. —My opinion of you, Sir, said Oswald, is not founded upon thoughts: I judge of men by their actions; a rule, I believe, it will not suit you to be tried by.—None of your insolent admonitions, father! returned Wenlock; this is neither the time nor the place for them.—That is truer than you are aware of, Sir; I meant not to enter into the subject just now.—Be silent, said my Lord. I shall enter into this subject with you hereafter; then look you, be prepared for it! In the mean time, do you, Dick Wenlock, answer to my questions. Do you think Edmund is concealed in this apartment?—No, Sir.—Do you think there is any mystery in it?—No, my Lord.—Is it haunted, think you?—No, I think not.—Should you be afraid to try?—In what manner, my Lord?—Why, you have shewn your wit upon the subject, and I mean to shew your courage; you, and Jack Markham your confident, shall sleep

here

here three nights, as Edmund has done before.—Sir, said Sir Robert, for what purpose? I should be glad to understand why.—I have my reasons, Sir, as well as your kinsmen there.—No reply, Sirs! I insist upon being obeyed in this point. Joseph, let the beds be well aired, and every thing made agreeable to the Gentlemen: If there is any contrivance to impose upon me, they, I am sure, will have pleasure in detecting it; and, if not, I shall obtain my end in making these rooms habitable. Oswald, come with me; and the rest may go where they list till dinner-time.

The Baron went with Oswald into the parlour. Now, tell me father, said he, do you disapprove what I have done?—Quite the contrary, my Lord, said he; I entirely approve it.—But you do not know all my reasons for it. Yesterday Edmund's behaviour was different from what I have ever seen it; he is naturally frank and open in all his ways; but he was then silent, thoughtful, absent; he sighed deeply, and once I saw tears stand in his eyes: Now, I do suspect there is something uncommon in that apartment; that Edmund has discovered the secret; and, fearing to disclose it, he is fled away

from the house. As to this letter, perhaps, he may have written it to hint that there is more than he dares reveal; I tremble at the hints contained in it, though I shall appear to make light of it: But I and mine are innocent; and if Heaven discloses the guilt of others, I ought to adore and submit to its decrees.—That is prudently and piously resolved, my Lord; let us do our duty, and leave events to Heaven.—But, father, I have a further view in obliging my kinsmen to sleep there: If any thing should appear to them, it is better that it should only be known to my own family; if there is nothing in it, I shall put to the proof the courage and veracity of my two kinsmen, of whom I think very indifferently. I mean shortly to inquire into many things I have heard lately to their disadvantage; and, if I find them guilty, they shall not escape with impunity.—My Lord, said Oswald, you judge like yourself; I wish you to make inquiry concerning them, and believe the result will be to their confusion, and your Lordship will be enabled to re-establish the peace of your family.

During this conversation, Oswald was upon his guard, lest any thing should escape that

that might create suspicion. He withdrew as soon as he could with decency, and left the Baron meditating what all these things should mean: He feared there was some misfortune impending over his house, though he knew not from what cause.

He dined with his children and kinsmen, and strove to appear cheerful; but a gloom was perceivable through his deportment. Sir Robert was reserved and respectful; Mr. William was silent and attentive; the rest of the family dutifully assiduous to my Lord; only Wenlock and Markham were sullen and chagrined. The Baron detained the young men the whole afternoon; he strove to amuse and to be amused; he shewed the greatest affection and parental regard to his children, and endeavoured to conciliate their affections, and engage their gratitude by kindness. Wenlock and Markham felt their courage abate as the night approached: At the hour of nine, old Joseph came to conduct them to the haunted apartment; they took leave of their kinsmen, and went up stairs with heavy hearts.

They found the chamber set in order for them, and a table spread with provision and good

good liquor to keep up their spirits.—It seems, said Wenlock, that your friend Edmund was obliged to you for his accommodations here. —Sir, said Joseph, his accommodations were bad enough the first night; but, afterwards, they were bettered by my Lord's orders.—Owing to your officious cares, said Wenlock. —I own it, said Joseph, and I am not ashamed of it.—Are you not anxious to know what is become of him? said Markham.—Not at all, Sir; I trust he is in the best protection; so good a young man as he is, is safe every where.—You see, cousin Jack, said Wenlock, how this villain has stole the hearts of my uncle's servants: I suppose this canting old fellow knows where he is, if the truth were known.—Have you any further commands for me, Gentlemen? said the old man.—No, not we.—Then I am ordered to attend my Lord, when you have done with me.—Go, then, about your business. Joseph went away, glad to be dismissed.

What shall we do, cousin Jack, said Wenlock, to pass away the time? it is plaguy dull sitting here.—Dull enough, said Markham; I think the best thing we can do, is to go to bed, and sleep it away.—Faith, says Wenlock,

I am

I am in no disposition to sleep! Who would have thought the old man would have obliged us to spend the night here?—Don't say us, I beg of you; it was all your own doing, replied Markham.—I did not intend he should have taken me at my word.—Then you should have spoken more cautiously. I have always been governed by you, like a fool as I am; you play the braggart, and I suffer for it: But they begin to see through your fine-spun arts and contrivances, and I believe you will meet with your deserts one day or other.—What now? do you mean to affront me, Jack? Know, that some are born to plan, others to execute; I am one of the former, thou of the latter: Know your friend, or——Or what? replied Markham; do you mean to threaten me? If you do!—What then? said Wenlock.—Why, then, I will try which of us two is the best man, Sir! Upon this Markham arose, and put himself into a posture of defence. Wenlock perceiving he was serious in his anger, began to sooth him; he persuaded, he flattered, he promised great things if he would be composed. Markham was sullen, uneasy, resentful; whenever he spoke, it was to upbraid Wen-

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lock

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lock with his treachery and falsehood. Wenlock tried all his eloquence to get him into a good humour, but in vain; he threatened to acquaint his Uncle with all that he knew, and to exculpate himself at the other's expence. Wenlock began to find his choler rise; they were both almost choaked with rage; and, at length, they both rose with a resolution to fight.

As they stood with their fists clenched, on a sudden they were alarmed with a dismal groan from the room underneath. They stood like statues petrified by fear, yet listening with trembling expectation: A second groan increased their consternation; and, soon after, a third completed it. They staggered to a seat, and sunk down upon it, ready to faint; presently, all the doors flew open, a pale glimmering light appeared at the door, from the staircase, and a man in complete armour entered the room: He stood, with one hand extended, pointing to the outward door; they took the hint, and crawled away as fast as fear would let them; they staggered along the gallery, and from thence to the Baron's apartment, where Wenlock sunk down

down in a swoon, and Markham had just strength enough to knock at the door.

The servant who slept in the outward room alarmed his Lord: Markham cried out—For Heaven's sake, let us in! Upon hearing his voice, the door was opened, and Markham approached his Uncle in such an attitude of fear, as excited a degree of it in the Baron. He pointed to Wenlock, who was with some difficulty recovered from the fit he was fallen into; the servant was terrified, he rung the alarm-bell; the servants came running from all parts to their Lord's apartment: The young Gentlemen came likewise, and presently all was confusion, and the terror was universal. Oswald, who guessed the business, was the only one that could question them; he asked several times,—What is the matter? Markham, at last, answered him:—We have seen the ghost!——All regard to secresy was now at an end; the echo ran through the whole family:—They have seen the ghost!

The Baron desired Oswald to talk to the young men, and endeavour to quiet the disturbance. He came forward; he comforted some, he rebuked others; he bad the servants retire into the outward room: The

Baron, with his sons and kinsmen, remained in the bed-chamber.—It is very unfortunate, said Oswald, that this affair should be made so public; surely these young men might have related what they had seen, without alarming the whole family: I am very much concerned upon my Lord's account.—I thank you, father, said the Baron; but prudence was quite overthrown here: Wenlock was half dead, and Markham half distracted; the family were alarmed without my being able to prevent it: But let us hear what these poor terrified creatures say. Oswald demanded, —What have you seen, Gentlemen?—The ghost! said Markham.—In what form did it appear?—A man in armour.—Did it speak to you?—No.—What did it do to terrify you so much?—It stood at the farthest door, and pointed to the outward door, as if to have us leave the room; we did not wait for a second notice, but came away as fast as we could.—Did it follow you?—No.—Then you need not have raised such a disturbance. Wenlock lifted up his head, and spoke:—I believe, father, if you had been with us, you would not have stood upon ceremonies any more than we did. I wish my Lord would send you to parley

parley with the ghost; for, without doubt, you are better qualified than we.—My Lord, said Oswald, I will go thither, with your permission; I will see that every thing is safe, and bring the key back to you: Perhaps this may help to dispel the fears that have been raised; at least, I will try to do it.—I thank you, father, for your good offices; do as you please.

Oswald went into the outward room. I am going, said he, to shut up the apartment: The young Gentlemen have been more frightened than they had occasion for; I will try to account for it. Which of you will go with me? They all drew back, except Joseph, who offered to bear him company. They went into the bed-room in the haunted apartment, and found every thing quiet there. They put out the fire, extinguished the lights, locked the door, and brought away the key. As they returned,—I thought how it would be, said Joseph.—Hush! not a word, said Oswald; you find we are suspected of something, though they know not what. Wait till you are called upon, and then we will both speak to purpose. They carried the key to the Baron.

All is quiet in the apartment, said Oswald, as we can testify.—Did you ask Joseph to go with you, said the Baron, or did he offer himself?—My Lord, I asked if any body would go with me, and they all declined it but he; I thought proper to have a witness beside myself, for whatever might be seen or heard. —Joseph, you was servant to the late Lord Lovel; what kind of man was he?—A very comely man, please your Lordship.—Should you know him if you were to see him?—I cannot say, my Lord.—Would you have any objection to sleep a night in that apartment?—I beg,—I hope,—I beseech your Lordship not to command me to do it!—You are then afraid; why did you offer yourself to go thither?—Because I was not so much frightened as the rest.—I wish you would lie a night there; but, I do not insist upon it.—My Lord, I am a poor ignorant old man, not fit for such an undertaking: Beside, if I should see the ghost, and if it should be the person of my Master, and if it should tell me any thing, and bid me keep it secret, I should not dare to disclose it; and then, what service should I do your Lordship?—That is true, indeed, said the Baron.

This ſpeech, ſaid Sir Robert, is both a ſimple and an artful one: You ſee, however, that Joſeph is not a man for us to depend upon; he regards the Lord Lovel, though dead, more than Lord Fitz-Owen, living; he calls him his Maſter, and promiſes to keep his ſecrets. What ſay you, father, Is the ghoſt your Maſter, or your friend? Are you under any obligation to keep his ſecrets?— Sir, ſaid Oſwald, I anſwer as Joſeph does; I would ſooner die than diſcover a ſecret revealed in that manner.—I thought as much, ſaid Sir Robert; there is a myſtery in father Oſwald's behaviour, which I cannot comprehend.—Do not reflect upon the father, ſaid the Baron, I have no cauſe to complain of him; perhaps the myſtery may be too ſoon explained: But let us not anticipate evils. Oſwald and Joſeph have ſpoken like good men; I am ſatisfied with their anſwers: Let us, who are innocent, reſt in peace; and let us endeavour to reſtore peace in the family; and do you, father, aſſiſt us.—With my beſt ſervices, ſaid Oſwald. He called the ſervants in: Let nothing be mentioned out of doors, ſaid he, of what has lately paſſed within, eſpecially in the eaſt apartment; the young

Gentlemen

Gentlemen had not ſo much reaſon to be frightened as they apprehended; a piece of furniture fell down in the rooms underneath, which made the noiſe that alarmed them ſo much: But I can certify that all things in the rooms are in quiet, and there is nothing to fear. All of you attend me in the chapel in an hour; do your duties, put your truſt in God, and obey your Lord, and you will find every thing go right as it uſed to do.

They diſperſed; the ſun roſe, the day came on, and every thing went on in the uſual courſe: But the ſervants were not ſo eaſily ſatisfied; they whiſpered that ſomething was wrong, and expected the time that ſhould ſet all right.—The mind of the Baron was employed in meditating upon theſe circumſtances, that ſeemed to him the forerunners of ſome great events: He ſometimes thought of Edmund; he ſighed for his expulſion, and lamented the uncertainty of his fate; but, to his family, he appeared eaſy, and ſatisfied.

From the time of Edmund's departure, the fair Emma had many uneaſy hours; ſhe wiſhed to inquire after him, but feared to ſhew any ſolicitude concerning him: The next day, when her brother William came

into her apartment, ſhe took courage to aſk a queſtion.—Pray, brother, can you give any gueſs what is become of Edmund?—No, ſaid he (with a ſigh); why do you aſk me?—Becauſe, my dear William, I ſhould think if any body knew, it muſt be you; and I thought he loved you too well to leave you in ignorance: But don't you think he left the Caſtle in a very ſtrange manner?—I do, my dear; there is a myſtery in every circumſtance of his departure: Neverthelefs (I will truſt you with a ſecret) he did not leave the Caſtle without making a diſtinction in my favour.—I thought ſo, ſaid ſhe; but you might tell *me* what you know about him.—Alas! my dear Emma! I know nothing: When I ſaw him laſt, he ſeemed a good deal affected, as if he were taking leave of me; and I had a foreboding that we parted for a longer time than uſual.—Ah! ſo had I, ſaid ſhe, when he parted from me in the garden.—What leave did he take of you, Emma?—She bluſhed, and heſitated to tell him all that paſſed between them; but he begged, perſuaded, inſiſted; and, at length, under the ſtrongeſt injunctions of ſecrecy, ſhe told him all. He ſaid, that Edmund's behaviour on

that

that occasion was as mysterious as the rest of his conduct; but, now you have revealed your secret, you have a right to know mine. He then gave her the letter he found upon his pillow; she read it with great emotion. Saint Winifred assist me! said she; what can I think? "The peasant Edmund is no more, "but there lives one,"——that is to my thinking, Edmund lives, but is no peasant.—Go on, my dear, said William; I like your explanation.—Nay, brother, I only guess; but what think you?—I believe we think alike in more than one respect, that he meant to recommend no other person than himself to your favour; and, if he were indeed of noble birth, I would prefer him to a prince for a husband to my Emma!—Bless me! said she, do you think it possible that he should be of either birth or fortune?—It is hard to say what is possible! we have proof that the east apartment is haunted: It was there that Edmund was made acquainted with many secrets, I doubt not; and, perhaps, his own fate may be involved in that of others. I am confident that what he saw and heard there, was the cause of his departure. We must wait with patience the unravelling this intri-

cate affair: I believe I need not enjoin your ſecreſy as to what I have ſaid; your heart will be my ſecurity.—What mean you, brother?—Don't affect ignorance, my dear; you love Edmund, ſo do I; it is nothing to be aſhamed of: It would have been ſtrange, if a girl of your good ſenſe had not diſtinguiſhed a ſwan among a flock of geeſe.—Dear William, don't let a word of this eſcape you; but you have taken a weight off my heart. You may depend that I will not diſpoſe of my hand or heart till I know the end of this affair. William ſmiled: Keep them for Edmund's *friend*: I ſhall rejoice to ſee him in a ſituation to aſk them.—Huſh, my brother! not a word more; I hear footſteps. They were her eldeſt brother's, who came to aſk Mr. William to ride out with him, which finiſhed the conference.

The fair Emma from this time aſſumed an air of ſatisfaction; and William frequently ſtole away from his companions to talk with his ſiſter upon their favourite ſubject.

While theſe things paſſed at the Caſtle of Lovel, Edmund, and his companion John Wyatt proceeded on their journey to Sir Philip Harclay's ſeat; they converſed together

on

on the way, and Edmund found him a man of underſtanding, though not improved by education; he alſo diſcovered that John loved his Maſter, and reſpected him even to veneration; from him he learned many particulars concerning that worthy Knight. Wyatt told him, that Sir Philip maintained twelve old ſoldiers who had been maimed and diſabled in the wars, and had no proviſion made for them; alſo ſix old officers, who had been unfortunate, and were grown grey without preferment; he likewiſe mentioned the Greek Gentleman, his maſter's captive and friend, as a man eminent for valour and piety; but, beſide theſe, ſaid Wyatt, there are many others who eat of my Maſter's bread, and drink of his cup, and who join in bleſſings and prayers to Heaven for their noble benefactor; his ears are ever open to diſtreſs, his hand to relieve it, and he ſhares in every good man's joys and bleſſings.—Oh, what a glorious character! ſaid Edmund; how my heart throbs with wiſhes to imitate ſuch a man! Oh, that I might reſemble him though at ever ſo great a diſtance! Edmund was never weary of hearing the actions of this truly great man, nor Wyatt with relating

them; and, during three days journey, there were but few pauſes in their converſation.

The fourth day, when they came within view of the houſe, Edmund's heart began to raiſe doubts of his reception.—If, ſaid he, Sir Philip ſhould not receive me kindly, if he ſhould reſent my long neglect, and diſown my acquaintance, it would be no more than juſtice.

He ſent Wyatt before, to notify his arrival to Sir Philip, while he waited at the gate, full of doubts and anxieties concerning his reception. Wyatt was met and congratulated on his return by moſt of his fellow-ſervants; he aſked,—Where is my Maſter?—In the parlour.—Are any ſtrangers with him?—No, only his own family.—Then I will ſhew myſelf to him. He preſented himſelf before Sir Philip.—So, John, ſaid he, you are welcome home! I hope you left your parents and relations well.—All well, thank God! and ſend their humble duty to your Honour, and they pray for you every day of their lives; I hope your Honour is in good health.—Very well.—Thank God for that! but, Sir, I have ſomething further to tell you: I have had a companion all the way home, a perſon who

comes

comes to wait on your Honour, on business of great consequence, as he says.—Who is that, John?—It is Master Edmund Twyford, from the Castle of Lovel.—Young Edmund! says Sir Philip, surprised: Where is he?—At the gate, Sir.—Why did you leave him there?—Because he bad me come before, and acquaint your Honour, that he waits your pleasure.—Bring him hither, said Sir Philip; tell him I shall be glad to see him.

John made haste to deliver his message, and Edmund followed him in silence into Sir Philip's presence: He bowed low, and kept at distance. Sir Philip held out his hand, and bad him approach. As he drew near, he was seized with an universal trembling; he kneeled down, took his hand, kissed it, and pressed it to his heart in silence.

You are welcome, young man! said Sir Philip; take courage, and speak for yourself. Edmund sighed deeply; he at length broke silence with difficulty.—I am come thus far, noble Sir, to throw myself at your feet, and implore your protection. You are, under God, my only reliance.—I receive you, said Sir Philip, with all my heart! Your person is greatly improved since I saw you last, and

I hope your mind is equally so; I have heard a great character of you from some that knew you in France. I remember the promise I made you long ago, and am ready now to fulfil it, upon condition that you have done nothing to disgrace the good opinion I formerly entertained of you; and am ready to serve you in any thing consistent with my own honour. Edmund kissed the hand that was extended to raise him.—I accept your favour, Sir, upon this condition only; and if ever you find me to impose upon your credulity, or encroach on your goodness, may you renounce me from that moment!—Enough, said Sir Philip; rise, then, and let me embrace you: You are truly welcome!—Oh, noble Sir! said Edmund, I have a strange story to tell you; but it must be by ourselves, with only Heaven to bear witness to what passes between us.—Very well, said Sir Philip; I am ready to hear you: But first, go and get some refreshment after your journey, and then come to me again; John Wyatt will attend you.—I want no refreshment, said Edmund; and I cannot eat or drink till I have told my business to your Honour.—Well then, said Sir Philip, come

along

along with me. He took the youth by the hand, and led him into another parlour, leaving his friends in great ſurpriſe, what this young man's errand could be: John Wyatt told them all that he knew relating to Edmund's birth, character, and ſituation.

When Sir Philip had ſeated his young friend, he liſtened in ſilence to the ſurpriſing tale he had to tell him. Edmund told him briefly the moſt remarkable circumſtances of his life, from the time when he firſt ſaw and liked him, till his return from France; but from that æra, he related at large every thing that had happened, recounting every intereſting particular, which was imprinted on his memory in ſtrong and laſting characters.—Sir Philip grew every moment more affected by the recital; ſometimes he claſped his hands together, he lifted them up to Heaven, he ſmote his breaſt, he ſighed, he exclaimed aloud; when Edmund related his dream, he breathed ſhort, and ſeemed to devour him with attention; when he deſcribed the fatal cloſet, he trembled, ſighed, ſobbed, and was almoſt ſuffocated with his agitations. But when he related all that paſſed between his ſuppoſed mother and himſelf, and finally pro-

duced the jewels, the proofs of his birth, and the death of his unfortunate mother—he flew to him, he pressed him to his bosom, he strove to speak, but speech was for some minutes denied: He wept aloud; and, at length, his words found their way in broken exclamations—Son of my dearest friend!—dear and precious relic of a noble house!—child of providence!—the beloved of Heaven!—welcome! thrice welcome to my arms!—to my heart!—I will be thy parent from henceforward, and thou shalt be indeed my child, my heir! My mind told me from the first moment I beheld thee, that thou wert the image of my friend! my heart then opened itself to receive thee, as his offspring. I had a strange foreboding that I was to be thy protector. I would then have made thee my own; but Heaven orders things for the best; it made thee the instrument of this discovery, and in its own time and manner conducted thee to my arms. Praise be to God for his wonderful doings towards the children of men! every thing that has befallen thee is by his direction, and he will not leave his work unfinished; I trust that I shall be his instrument to do justice on the guilty, and to

restore

restore the orphan of my friend to his rights and title. I devote myself to this service, and will make it the business of my life to effect it.

Edmund gave vent to his emotions, in raptures of joy and gratitude. They spent several hours in this way, without thinking of the time that passed; the one inquiring, the other explaining, and repeating, every particular of the interesting story.

At length they were interrupted by the careful John Wyatt, who was anxious to know if any thing was likely to give trouble to his Master.—Sir, said John, it grows dark, do you want a light?—We want no light but what Heaven gives us, said Sir Philip; I knew not whether it was dark or light.—I hope, said John, nothing has happened, I hope your Honour has heard no bad tidings,—I—I—I hope no offence.—None at all, said the good Knight; I am obliged to your solicitude for me: I have heard some things that grieve me, and others that give me great pleasure; but the sorrows are past, and the joys remain.—Thank God! said John; I was afraid something was the matter to give your Honour trouble.—I thank you, my good

servant!

fervant! You fee this young gentleman; I would have you, John, devote yourfelf to his fervice: I give you to him for an attendant on his perfon, and would have you fhow your affection to me by your attachment to him.—Oh, Sir! faid John, in a melancholy voice, what have I done to be turned out of your fervice?—No fuch matter, John, faid Sir Philip; you will not leave my fervice.—Sir, faid John, I would rather die than leave you.—And, my lad, I like you too well to part with you; but in ferving my friend you will ferve me: Know that this young man is my fon.—Your fon, Sir! faid John.—Not my natural fon, but my relation; my fon by adoption, my heir!—And will he live with you, Sir?—Yes, John; and I hope to die with him.—Oh, then, I will ferve him with all my heart and foul: and I will do my beft to pleafe you both.—I thank you, John, and I will not forget your honeft love and duty: I have fo good an opinion of you, that I will tell you of fome things concerning this gentleman that will entitle him to your refpect.—'Tis enough for me, faid John, to know that your honour refpects him, to make me pay him as much duty as yourfelf.—But, John,

when you know him better, you will reſpect him ſtill more; at preſent, I ſhall only tell you what he is not, for you think him only the ſon of Andrew Twyford.—And is he not, ſaid John?—No; but his wife nurſed him, and he paſſed for her ſon.—And does old Twyford know it, Sir?—He does, and will bear witneſs to it; but he is the ſon of a near friend of mine, of quality ſuperior to my own, and as ſuch you muſt ſerve and reſpect him. ——I ſhall, to be ſure, Sir; but what name ſhall I call him?—You ſhall know that hereafter; in the mean time bring a light, and wait on us to the other parlour.

When John was withdrawn, Sir Philip ſaid, that is a point to be conſidered and determined immediately: It is proper that you ſhould aſſume a name till you can take that of your father; for I chooſe you ſhould drop that of your foſter-father; and I would have you be called by one that is reſpectable.—In that, and every other point, I will be wholly governed by you, Sir, ſaid Edmund. —Well then, I will give you the name of Seagrave: I ſhall ſay that you are a relation of my own; and my mother was really of that family.

John ſoon returned, and attended them into the other parlour: Sir Philip entered, with Edmund in his hand.—My friends, ſaid he, this gentleman is Mr. Edward Seagrave, the ſon of a dear friend and relation of mine: He was loſt in his infancy, brought up by a good woman out of pure humanity, and is but lately reſtored to his own family: The circumſtances ſhall be made known hereafter: In the mean time, I have taken him under my care and protection, and will uſe all my power and intereſt to ſee him reſtored to his fortune, which is enjoyed by the uſurper who was the cauſe of his expulſion, and the death of his parents. Receive him as my relation, and friend: Zadiſky, do you embrace him firſt. Edmund, you and this gentleman muſt love each other for my ſake; hereafter you will do it for your own. They all roſe, each embraced and congratulated the young man. Zadiſky ſaid, Sir, whatever griefs and misfortunes you may have endured, you may reckon them at an end, from the hour you are beloved and protected by Sir Philip Harclay.—I firmly believe it, Sir, replied Edmund; and my heart enjoys, already, more happineſs than I ever yet felt, and promiſes

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me all that I can wish in future: His friendship is the earnest Heaven gives me of its blessings hereafter.

They sat down to supper with mutual cheerfulness; and Edmund enjoyed the repast with more satisfaction than he had felt a long time. Sir Philip saw his countenance brighten up, and looked on him with heart-felt pleasure.—Every time I look on you, said he, reminds me of your father; you are the same person I loved twenty-three years ago: I rejoice to see you under my roof. Go to your repose early, and to-morrow we will consult farther. Edmund withdrew, and enjoyed a night of sweet undisturbed repose.

The next morning Edmund arose in perfect health and spirits; he waited on his benefactor. They were soon after joined by Zadisky, who shewed great attention and respect to the youth, and offered him his best services without reserve. Edmund accepted them with equal respect and modesty; and finding himself at ease, began to display his amiable qualities. They breakfasted together; afterwards, Sir Philip desired Edmund to walk out with him.

As ſoon as they were out of hearing, Sir Philip ſaid,—I could not ſleep laſt night for thinking of your affairs; I laid ſchemes for you, and rejected them again. We muſt lay our plan before we begin to act. What ſhall be done with this treacherous kinſman! this inhuman monſter! this aſſaſſin of his neareſt relation? I will riſk my life and fortune to bring him to juſtice. Shall I go to court, and demand juſtice of the King? or ſhall I accuſe him of the murder, and make him ſtand a public trial? If I treat him as a Baron of the realm, he muſt be tried by his Peers; if as a commoner, he muſt be tried at the county aſſize: But we muſt ſhew reaſon why he ſhould be degraded from his title. Have you any thing to propoſe?—Nothing, Sir; I have only to wiſh that it might be as private as poſſible, for the ſake of my noble benefactor, the Lord Fitz-Owen, upon whom ſome part of the family diſgrace would naturally fall; and that would be an ill return for all his kindneſs and generoſity to me.—That is a generous and grateful conſideration on your part; but you owe ſtill more to the memory of your injured parents. However, there is yet another way that ſuits me better than any

hitherto

hitherto propoſed: I will challenge the traitor to meet me in the field; and, if he has ſpirit enough to anſwer my call, I will there bring him to juſtice; if not, I will bring him to a public trial.

No, Sir, ſaid Edmund, that is my province: Should I ſtand by and ſee my noble, gallant friend expoſe his life for me, I ſhould be unworthy to bear the name of that friend whom you ſo much lament. It will become his ſon to vindicate his name, and revenge his death. I will be the challenger, and no other.—And do you think he will anſwer the challenge of an unknown youth, with nothing but his pretenſions to his name and title? Certainly not. Leave this matter to me: I think of a way that will oblige him to meet me at the houſe of a third perſon who is known to all the parties concerned, and where we will have authentic witneſſes of all that paſſes between him and me. I will deviſe the time, place, and manner, and ſatisfy all your ſcruples. Edmund offered to reply; but Sir Philip bad him be ſilent, and let him proceed in his own way.

He then led him over his eſtate, and ſhewed him every thing deſerving his notice; he told him

him all the particulars of his domeſtic œconomy; and they returned home in time to meet their friends at dinner.

They ſpent ſeveral days in conſulting how to bring Sir Walter to account, and in improving their friendſhip and confidence in each other. Edmund endeared himſelf ſo much to his friend and patron, that he declared him his adopted ſon and heir before all his friends and ſervants, and ordered them to reſpect him as ſuch. He every day improved their love and regard for him, and became the darling of the whole family.

After much conſideration, Sir Philip fixed his reſolutions, and began to execute his purpoſes. He ſet out for the ſeat of the Lord Clifford, attended by Edmund, M. Zadiſky, and two ſervants. Lord Clifford received them with kindneſs and hoſpitality.

Sir Philip preſented Edmund to Lord Clifford and his family, as his near relation and preſumptive heir: They ſpent the evening in the pleaſures of convivial mirth and hoſpitable entertainment. The next day Sir Philip began to open his mind to Lord Clifford, informing him that both his young friend and himſelf had received great injuries from the

present Lord Lovel, for which they were resolved to call him to account; but that, for many reasons, they were desirous to have proper witnesses of all that should pass between them, and begging the favour of his Lordship to be the principal one. Lord Clifford acknowledged the confidence placed in him; and besought Sir Philip to let him be the arbitrator between them. Sir Philip assured him, that their wrongs would not admit of arbitration, as he should hereafter judge; but that he was unwilling to explain them further till he knew certainly whether or not the Lord Lovel would meet him; for, if he refused, he must take another method with him.

Lord Clifford was desirous to know the grounds of the quarrel; but Sir Philip declined entering into particulars at present, assuring him of a full information hereafter. He then sent M. Zadisky, attended by John Wyatt, and a servant of Lord Clifford, with a letter to Lord Lovel; the contents were as follows:

"My Lord Lovel!

"Sir Philip Harclay earnestly desires to "see you at the house of Lord Clifford, "where he waits to call you to account for "the

"the injuries done by you to the late Ar-
"thur Lord Lovel, your kinſman: If you
"accept his demand, he will make the Lord
"Clifford a witneſs and a judge of the cauſe;
"if not, he will expoſe you publicly as a
"traitor and a coward. Pleaſe to anſwer
"this letter, and he will acquaint you with
"the time, place, and manner of the meet-
"ing.

"PHILIP HARCLAY."

Zadiſky preſented the letter to Lord Lovel, informing him that he was the friend of Sir Philip Harclay. He ſeemed ſurpriſed and confounded at the contents; but, putting on an haughty air; I know nothing, ſaid he, of the buſineſs this letter hints at: But wait a few hours, and I will give you an anſwer. He gave orders to treat Zadiſky as a gentleman in every reſpect, except in avoiding his company; for the Greek had a ſhrewd and penetrating aſpect, and he obſerved every turn of his countenance. The next day he came and apologized for his abſence, and gave him the anſwer; ſending his reſpects to the Lord Clifford. The meſſengers returned with all ſpeed, and Sir Philip read the anſwer before all preſent.

"Lord Lovel knows not of any injuries "done by him to the late Arthur Lord "Lovel, whom he ſucceeded by juſt right of "inheritance; nor of any right Sir Philip "Harclay has, to call to account a man to "whom he is barely known, having ſeen "him only once, many years ago, at the "houſe of his uncle, the old Lord Lovel: "Neverthelefs, Lord Lovel will not ſuffer "any man to call his name and honour into "queſtion with impunity; for which reaſon "he will meet Sir Philip Harclay at any "time, place, and in what manner he ſhall "appoint, bringing the ſame number of "friends and dependents, that juſtice may be "done to all parties.

"LOVEL."

'Tis well, ſaid Sir Philip: I am glad to find he has the ſpirit to meet me; he is an enemy worthy of my ſword. Lord Clifford then propoſed, that all parties ſhould paſs the borders, and obtain leave of the warden of the Scottiſh marches to decide the quarrel in his juriſdiction, with a ſelect number of friends on both ſides. Sir Philip agreed to the propoſal; and Lord Clifford wrote in his own name to aſk permiſſion of the Lord Graham, that

that his friends might come there; and obtained it, on condition that neither party ſhould exceed a limited number of friends and followers.

Lord Clifford ſent choſen meſſengers to Lord Lovel, acquainting him with the conditions, and appointing the time, place, and manner of their meeting, and that he had been deſired to accept the office of judge of the field. Lord Lovel accepted the conditions, and promiſed to be there without fail. Lord Clifford notified the ſame to Lord Graham, warden of the marches, who cauſed a piece of ground to be encloſed for the liſts, and made preparations againſt the day appointed.

In the interim, Sir Philip Harclay thought proper to ſettle his worldly affairs: He made Zadiſky acquainted with every circumſtance of Edmund's hiſtory, and the obligation that lay upon him to revenge the death of his friend, and ſee juſtice done to his heir. Zadiſky entered into the cauſe with an ardour that ſpoke the affection he bore to his friend. Why, ſaid he, would you not ſuffer me to engage this traitor?—Your life is of too much conſequence to be ſtaked againſt his: But though I truſt that the juſtice of your cauſe muſt ſucceed, yet, if it ſhould happen otherwiſe,

wiſe, I vow to revenge you; he ſhall never go back from us both: However, my hope and truſt is, to ſee your arm the miniſter of juſtice. Sir Philip then ſent for a lawyer and made his will, by which he appointed Edmund his chief heir, by the name of Lovel, alias Seagrave, alias Twyford; he ordered that all his old friends, ſoldiers, and ſervants, ſhould be maintained in the ſame manner during their lives; he left to Zadiſky an annuity of an hundred a year, and a legacy of two hundred pounds; one hundred pounds to a certain monaſtery; the ſame ſum to be diſtributed among diſbanded ſoldiers, and the ſame to the poor and needy in his neighbourhood.

He appointed Lord Clifford joint executor with Edmund, and gave his will into that nobleman's care, recommending Edmund to his favour and protection. If I live, ſaid he, I will make him appear to be worthy of it; if I die, he will want a friend. I am deſirous your Lordſhip, as a judge of the field, ſhould be unprejudiced on either ſide, that you may judge impartially. If I die, Edmund's pretenſions die with me; but my friend Zadiſky will acquaint you with the foundation of them. I take theſe pracautions, becauſe I ought to be prepared for every thing; but

my heart is warm with better hopes, and I truſt I ſhall live to juſtify my own cauſe, as well as that of my friend, who is a perſon of more conſequence than he appears to be. Lord Clifford accepted the truſt, and expreſſed the greateſt reliance upon Sir Philip's honour and veracity.

While theſe preparations were making for the great event that was to decide the pretenſions of Edmund, his enemies at the Caſtle of Lovel were brought to ſhame for their behaviour to him.

The diſagreement between Wenlock and Markham had by degrees brought on an explanation of ſome parts of their conduct. Father Oſwald had often hinted to the Baron, Wenlock's envy of Edmund's ſuperior qualities, and the artifices by which he had obtained ſuch an influence with Sir Robert, as to make him take his part upon all occaſions. Oſwald now took advantage of the breach between theſe two incendiaries, to perſuade Markham to juſtify himſelf at Wenlock's expence, and to tell all he knew of his wickedneſs; at length he promiſed to declare all he knew of Wenlock's conduct, as well in France as ſince their return, when he ſhould

be

be called upon; and, by him, Oſwald was enabled to unravel the whole of his contrivances, againſt the honour, intereſt, and even life of Edmund.

He prevailed on Hewſon, and Kemp his aſſociate, to add their teſtimony to the others. Hewſon confeſſed that he was touched in his conſcience, when he reflected on the cruelty and injuſtice of his behaviour to Edmund, whoſe behaviour towards him, after he had laid a ſnare for his life, was ſo noble and generous, that he was cut to the heart by it, and had ſuffered ſo much pain and remorſe, that he longed for nothing ſo much as an opportunity to unburden his mind; but the dread of Mr. Wenlock's anger, and the effects of his reſentment, had hitherto kept him ſilent, always hoping there would come a time, when he might have leave to declare the whole truth.

Oſwald conveyed this information to the Baron's ear, who waited for an opportunity to make the proper uſe of it. Not long after, the two principal incendiaries came to an open rupture, and Markham threatened Wenlock that he would ſhew his uncle what a ſerpent he had harboured in his boſom.

The Baron arrested his words, and insisted upon his telling all he knew: adding, if you speak the truth, I will support you; but if you prove false, I will punish you severely: As to Mr. Wenlock, he shall have a fair trial; and, if all the accusations I have heard are made good, it is high time that I should put him out of my family. The Baron, with a stern aspect, bade them follow him into the great hall; and sent for all the rest of the family together.

He then, with great solemnity, told them he was ready to hear all sides of the question. He declared the whole substance of his informations, and called upon the accusers to support the charge. Hewson and Kemp gave the same account they had done to Oswald, offering to swear to the truth of their testimony; several of the other servants related such circumstances as had come to their knowledge. Markham then spoke of every thing, and gave a particular account of all that had passed on the night they spent in the east apartment; he accused himself of being privy to Wenlock's villany, called himself fool and blockhead for being the instrument of his malignant disposition, and asked

asked pardon of his uncle for concealing it so long.

The Baron called upon Wenlock to reply to the charge; who, instead of answering, flew into a passion, raged, swore, threatened, and finally denied every thing. The witnesses persisted in their assertions. Markham desired leave to make known the reason why they were all afraid of him; he gives it out, said he, that he is to be my Lord's son-in-law; and they, supposing him to stand first in his favour, are afraid of his displeasure.—I hope, said the Baron, I shall not be at such a loss for a son-in-law, as to make choice of such a one as him; he never but once hinted at such a thing, and then I gave him no encouragement. I have long seen there was something very wrong in him; but I did not believe he was of so wicked a disposition: It is no wonder that princes should be so frequently deceived, when I, a private man, could be so much imposed upon within the circle of my own family. What think you, son Robert?—I, Sir, have been much more imposed on; and I take shame to myself on the occasion.—Enough, my son, said the Baron; a generous confession is only a proof

of growing wiſdom: You are now ſenſible, that the beſt of us are liable to impoſition. The artifices of this unworthy kinſman have ſet us at variance with each other, and driven away an excellent youth from this houſe, to go I know not whither: But he ſhall no longer triumph in his wickedneſs; he ſhall feel what it is to be baniſhed from the houſe of his protector. He ſhall ſet out for his mother's this very day; I will write to her in ſuch a manner as ſhall inform her that he has offended me, without particularizing the nature of his faults: I will give him an opportunity of recovering his credit with his own family, and this ſhall be my ſecurity againſt his doing further miſchief. May he repent, and be forgiven!

Markham deſerves puniſhment, but not in the ſame degree.—I confeſs it, ſaid he, and will ſubmit to whatever your Lordſhip ſhall enjoin.—You ſhall only be baniſhed for a time, but he for ever. I will ſend you abroad on a buſineſs that ſhall put you in a way to do credit to yourſelf, and ſervice to me. Son Robert, have you any objection to my ſentence?—My Lord, ſaid he, I have great reaſon to diſtruſt myſelf; I am ſenſible of my

own weakneſs, and your ſuperior wiſdom, as well as goodneſs; and I will henceforward ſubmit to you in all things.

The Baron ordered two of his ſervants to pack up Wenlock's clothes and neceſſaries, and to ſet out with him that very day; he bade ſome others keep an eye upon him leſt he ſhould eſcape: As ſoon as they were ready, my Lord wiſhed him a good journey, and gave him a letter for his mother. He departed without ſaying a word, in a ſullen kind of reſentment; but his countenance ſhewed the inward agitations of his mind.

As ſoon as he was gone, every mouth was opened againſt him; a thouſand ſtories came out that they never heard before: The Baron and his ſons were aſtoniſhed that he ſhould go on ſo long without detection. My Lord ſighed deeply at the thoughts of Edmund's expulſion, and ardently wiſhed to know what was become of him.

Sir Robert took the opportunity of coming to an explanation with his brother William; he took ſhame to himſelf for ſome part of his paſt behaviour. Mr. William owned his affection to Edmund, and juſtified it by his merit and attachment to him, which were

ſuch that he was certain no time or diſtance could alter them. He accepted his brother's acknowledgement, as a full amends for all that had paſſed, and begged that henceforward an entire love and confidence might ever ſubſiſt between them. Theſe new regulations reſtored peace, confidence, and harmony, in the Caſtle of Lovel.

At length, the day arrived for the combatants to meet. The Lord Graham, with twelve followers gentlemen, and twelve ſervants, was ready at the dawn of day to receive them.

The firſt that entered the field, was Sir Philip Harclay, Knight, armed completely, excepting his head-piece; Hugh Rugby, his Eſquire, bearing his lance; John Barnard, his page, carrying his helmet and ſpurs; and two ſervants in his proper livery. The next came Edmund, the heir of Lovel, followed by his ſervant John Wyatt; Zadiſky, followed by his ſervant.

At a ſhort diſtance came the Lord Clifford, as judge of the field, with his Eſquire, two pages, and two livery ſervants; followed by his eldeſt ſon, his nephew, and a gentleman his friend, each attended by one ſervant:

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He alſo brought a ſurgeon of note to take care of the wounded.

The Lord Graham ſaluted them; and, by his order, they took their places without the liſts, and the trumpet ſounded for the challenger. It was anſwered by the defendant, who ſoon after appeared, attended by three gentlemen his friends, with each one ſervant, beſide his own proper attendants.

A plabe was erected for the Lord Clifford, as judge of the field; he deſired Lord Graham would ſhare the office, who accepted it, on condition that the combatants ſhould make no objection; and they agreed to it with the greateſt courteſy and reſpect. They conſulted together on many points of honour and ceremony between the two combatants.

They appointed a marſhal of the field, and other inferior officers, uſually employed on theſe occaſions. The Lord Graham ſent the marſhal for the challenger, deſiring him to declare the cauſe of his quarrel before his enemy. Sir Philip Harclay then advanced, and thus ſpoke:

"I Philip Harclay, Knight, challenge "Walter, commonly called Lord Lovel, as a "baſe, treacherous, and bloody man, who,

"by his wicked arts and devices, did kill, "or cause to be killed, his kinsman, Arthur "Lord Lovel, my dear and noble friend. I "am called upon, in an extraordinary man-"ner, to revenge his death; and I will prove "the truth of what I have affirmed at the "peril of my life."

Lord Graham then bade the defendant answer to the charge. Lord Lovel stood forth before his followers, and thus replied:

"I Walter, Baron of Lovel, do deny the "charge against me, and affirm it to be a "base, false, and malicious accusation of this "Sir Philip Harclay, which I believe to be "invented by himself, or else framed by "some enemy, and told to him for wicked "ends; but, be that as it may, I will main-"tain my own honour, and prove him to be "a false traitor, at the hazard of my own "life, and to the punishment of his pre-"sumption."

Then said the Lord Graham,—Will not this quarrel admit of arbitration?—No, replied Sir Philip; when I have justified this charge, I have more to bring against him. I trust in God and the justice of my cause, and defy that traitor to the death! Lord Clif-

ford

ford then ſpoke a few words to Lord Graham, who immediately called to the marſhal, and bade him open the liſts, and deliver their weapons to the combatants.

While the marſhal was arranging the combatants and their followers, Edmund approached his friend and patron; he put one knee to the ground, he embraced his knees with the ſtrongeſt emotions of grief and anxiety. He was dreſſed in complete armour, with his viſor down; his device was a hawthorn, with a graft of the roſe upon it, the motto—*This is not my true parent*; but Sir Philip bade him take theſe words—*E fructu arbor cognoſcitur*.

Sir Philip embraced the youth with ſtrong marks of affection: Be compoſed, my child! ſaid he; I have neither guilt, fear, nor doubt in me; I am ſo certain of ſucceſs, that I bid you be prepared for the conſequence. Zadiſky embraced his friend, he comforted Edmund, he ſuggeſted every thing that could confirm his hopes of ſucceſs.

The marſhal waited to deliver the ſpear to Sir Philip; he now preſented it with the uſual form.—Sir, receive your lance, and God defend the right!—Sir Philip anſwered,

Amen! in a voice that was heard by all present.

He next presented his weapon to Lord Lovel with the same sentence, who likewise answered Amen! with a good courage. Immediately the lists were cleared, and the combatants began the fight.

They contended a long time with equal skill and courage; at length Sir Philip unhorsed his antagonist. The judges ordered, that either he should alight, or suffer his enemy to remount; he chose the former, and a short combat on foot ensued. The sweat ran off their bodies with the violence of the exercise. Sir Philip watched every motion of his enemy, and strove to weary him out, intending to wound, but not to kill him, unless obliged for his own safety.

He thrust his sword through his left arm, and demanded, whether he would confess the fact? Lord Lovel enraged, answered, he would die sooner. Sir Philip then passed the sword through his body twice, and Lord Lovel fell, crying out that he was slain.

I hope not, said Sir Philip, for I have a great deal of business for you to do before you die: Confess your sins, and endeavour to

atone

atone for them, as the only ground to hope for pardon.—Lord Lovel replied, You are the victor, uſe your good fortune generouſly!

Sir Philip took away his ſword, and then waved it ,over his head, and beckoned for aſſiſtance. The judges ſent to beg Sir Philip to ſpare the life of his enemy.—I will, ſaid he, upon condition that he will make an honeſt confeſſion.

Lord Lovel deſired a ſurgeon and a confeſſor.—You ſhall have both, ſaid Sir Philip; but you muſt firſt anſwer me a queſtion or two. Did you kill your kinſman or not?—It was not my hand that killed him, anſwered the wounded man.—It was done by your own order, however? You ſhall have no aſſiſtance till you anſwer this point.—It was, ſaid he, and Heaven is juſt!—Bear witneſs all preſent, ſaid Sir Philip; he confeſſes the fact!

He then beckoned Edmund, who approached.—Take off your helmet, ſaid he: Look on that youth, he is the ſon of your injured kinſman.—It is himſelf! ſaid the Lord Lovel, and fainted away.

Sir Philip then called for a ſurgeon and a prieſt, both of which Lord Graham had provided; the former began to bind up his

wounds,

wounds, and his aſſiſtants poured a cordial into his mouth.—Preſerve his life, if it be poſſible, ſaid Sir Philip; for much depends upon it.

He then took Edmund by the hand, and preſented him to all the company.—In this young man, ſaid he, you ſee the true heir of the houſe of Lovel! Heaven has in its own way made him the inſtrument to diſcover the death of his parents. His father was aſſaſſinated by order of that wicked man, who now receives his puniſhment; his mother was, by his cruel treatment, compelled to leave her own houſe; ſhe was delivered in the fields, and periſhed herſelf in ſeeking a ſhelter for her infant. I have ſufficient proofs of every thing I ſay, which I am ready to communicate to every perſon who deſires to know the particulars: Heaven, by my hand, has chaſtiſed him; he has confeſſed the fact I accuſe him of, and it remains that he make reſtitution of the fortune and honours he hath uſurped ſo long.

Edmund kneeled, and with uplifted hands returned thanks to Heaven, that his noble friend and champion was crowned with victory!—The Lords and gentlemen gathered

round

round them, they congratulated them both; while Lord Lovel's friends and followers were employed in taking care of him. Lord Clifford took Sir Philip's hand.—You have acted with ſo much honour and prudence, that it is preſumptuous to offer you advice; but what mean you to do with the wounded man?—I have not determined, ſaid he; I thank you for the hint, and beg your advice how to proceed.—Let us conſult Lord Graham, replied he.—Lord Graham inſiſted upon their going all to his caſtle; there, ſaid he, you will have impartial witneſſes of all that paſſes. Sir Philip was unwilling to give ſo much trouble. The Lord Graham proteſted he ſhould be proud to do any ſervice to ſo noble a gentleman. Lord Clifford enforced his requeſt, ſaying, it was better upon all accounts to keep their priſoner on this ſide the borders till they ſaw what turn his health would take, and to keep him ſafely till he had ſettled his worldly affairs.

This reſolution being taken, Lord Graham invited the wounded man and his friends to his caſtle, as being the neareſt place where he could be lodged and taken proper care of, it being dangerous to carry him further. They

accepted

accepted the proposal with many acknowledgments; and, having made a kind of litter of boughs, they all proceeded to Lord Graham's castle, where they put Lord Lovel to bed, and the surgeon dressed his wounds, and desired he might be kept quiet, not knowing at present whether they were dangerous or not.

About an hour after, the wounded man complained of thirst; he asked for the surgeon, and inquired if his life was in danger? The surgeon answered him doubtfully. He asked,—Where is Sir Philip Harclay?—In the castle.—Where is that young man whom he calls the heir of Lovel?—He is here, too.—Then I am surrounded with my enemies. I want to speak to one of my own servants, without witnesses; let one be sent to me.

The surgeon withdrew, and acquainted the gentlemen below.—He shall not speak to any man, said Sir Philip, but in my presence. He went with him into the sick man's room. Upon the sight of Sir Philip, he seemed in great agitation.—Am I not allowed to speak with my own servant, said he?—Yes, Sir, you may; but not without witnesses.—Then I am a prisoner, it seems?—No, not so, Sir; but

but some caution is necessary at present: But compose yourself, I do not wish for your death.—Then why did you seek it? I never injured you.—Yes, you have, in the person of my friend, and I am only the instrument of justice in the hand of Heaven; endeavour to make atonement while life is spared to you.—Shall I send the priest to you? perhaps he may convince you of the necessity of restitution, in order to obtain forgiveness of your sins.

Sir Philip sent for the priest and the surgeon, and obliged the servant to retire with him. I leave you, Sir, to the care of these gentlemen; and whenever a third person is admitted, I will be his attendant: I will visit you again within an hour. He then retired, and consulted his friends below; they were of opinion that no time should be lost.—You will then, said he, accompany me into the sick man's apartment in an hour's time.

Within the hour, Sir Philip, attended by Lord Clifford and Lord Graham, entered the chamber. Lord Lovel was in great emotion; the priest stood on one side of the bed, the surgeon on the other; the former exhorted him to confess his sins, the other desired he

might

might be left to his repoſe. Lord Lovel ſeemed in great anguiſh of mind; he trembled, and was in the utmoſt confuſion. Sir Philip entreated him, with the piety of a confeſſor, to conſider his ſoul's health before that of his body. He then aſked Sir Philip, by what means he knew that he was concerned in the death of his kinſman?—Sir, replied he, it was not merely by human means this fact was diſcovered. There is a certain apartment in the Caſtle of Lovel, that has been ſhut up theſe one-and-twenty years, but has lately been opened and examined into.

Oh Heaven! exclaimed he, then Geoffry muſt have betrayed me!—No, Sir, he has not, it was revealed in a very extraordinary manner to that youth whom it moſt concerns.—How can he be the heir of Lovel?—By being the ſon of that unfortunate woman, whom you cruelly obliged to leave her own houſe, to avoid being compelled to wed the murderer of her huſband: We are not ignorant, moreover, of the fictitious funeral you made for her. All is diſcoverd, and you will not tell us any more than we know already; but we deſire to have it confirmed by your confeſſion.—The judgments of Heaven are fallen upon

me!

me! ſaid Lord Lovel. I am childleſs, and one is ariſen from the grave to claim my inheritance.—Nothing, then, hinders you to do juſtice and make reſtitution; it is for the eaſe of your conſcience; and you have no other way of making atonement for all the miſchief you have done.—You know too much, ſaid the criminal, and I will relate what you do not know.

You may remember, proceeded he, that I ſaw you once at my uncle's houſe?—I well remember it.—At that time my mind was diſturbed by the baleful paſſion of envy; it was from that root all my bad actions ſprung.—Praiſe be to God! ſaid the good prieſt; he hath touched your heart with true contrition, and you ſhew the effect of his mercies; you will do juſtice, and you will be rewarded by the gift of repentance unto ſalvation.——Sir Philip deſired the penitent to proceed.

My kinſman excelled me in every kind of merit, in the graces of perſon and mind, in all his exerciſes, and in every accompliſhment. I was totally eclipſed by him, and I hated to be in his company; but what finiſhed my averſion, was his addreſſing the lady upon

upon whom I had fixed my affections: I strove to rival him there, but she gave him the preference, that, indeed, was only his due; but I could not bear to see, or acknowledge, it.

The most bitter hatred took possession of my breast, and I vowed to revenge the supposed injury as soon as opportunity should offer. I buried my resentment deep in my heart, and outwardly appeared to rejoice at his success; I made a merit of resigning my pretensions to him, but I could not bear to be present at his nuptials: I retired to my father's seat, and brooded over my revenge in secret. My father died this year, and soon after my uncle followed him; within another year my kinsman was summoned to attend the King on his Welsh expedition.

As soon as I heard he was gone from home, I resolved to prevent his return, exulting in the prospect of possessing his title, fortune, and his Lady. I hired messengers, who were constantly going and coming to give me intelligence of all that passed at the castle; I went there soon after, under pretence of visiting my kinsman. My spies brought me an account of all that happened;

pened; one informed me of the event of the battle, but could not tell whether my rival was living or dead; I hoped the latter, that I might avoid the crime I meditated: I reported his death to his Lady, who took it very heavily.

Soon after a meſſenger arrived with tidings that he was alive and well, and had obtained leave to return home immediately.

I inſtantly diſpatched my two emiſſaries to intercept him on the way. He made ſo much haſte to return, that he was met within a mile of his own caſtle: he had out-rode his ſervants, and was alone: They killed him, and drew him aſide out of the highway. They then came to me with all ſpeed, and deſired my orders; it was then about ſunſet: I ſent them back to fetch the dead body, which they brought privately into the caſtle: They tied it neck and heels, and put it into a trunk, which they buried under the floor in the cloſet you mentioned. The ſight of the body ſtung me to the heart; I then felt the pangs of remorſe, but it was too late: I took every precaution that prudence ſuggeſted to prevent the diſcovery; but nothing can be concealed from the eye of Heaven.

From

From that fatal hour I have never known peace, always in fear of ſomething impending to diſcover my guilt, and to bring me to ſhame: At length I am overtaken by juſtice. I am brought to a ſevere reckoning here; and I dread to meet one more ſevere hereafter.

Enough, ſaid the prieſt; you have done a good work, my ſon! truſt in the Lord; and now this burden is off your mind, the reſt will be made eaſy to you.

Lord Lovel took a minute's repoſe, and then went on.—I hope by the hint you gave, Sir Philip, the poor Lady is yet alive?—No, Sir, ſhe is not; but ſhe died not till after ſhe brought forth a ſon, whom Heaven made its inſtrument to diſcover and avenge the death of both his parents.—They are well avenged! ſaid he. I have no children to lament for me; all mine have been taken from me in the bloom of youth; only one daughter lived to be twelve years old; I intended her for a wife for one of my nephews, but within three months I have buried her. He ſighed, wept, and was ſilent.

The gentlemen preſent lifted up their hands and eyes to Heaven in ſilence. The will of Heaven be obeyed! ſaid the prieſt. My peni-

tent

tent hath confessed all; what more would you require?—That he make atonement, said Sir Philip; that he surrender the title and estate to the right heir, and dispose of his own proper fortune to his nearest relations, and resign himself to penitence and preparation for a future state. For this time I leave him with you, father, and will join my prayers with yours for his repentance.

So saying, he left the room, and was followed by the Barons and the surgeon; the priest alone remaining with him. As soon as they were out of hearing, Sir Philip questioned the surgeon concerning his patient's situation; who answered, that at present he saw no signs of immediate danger, but he could not yet pronounce that there was none: if he were mortally wounded, said he, he could not be so well, nor speak so long without faintness; and it is my opinion that he will soon recover, if nothing happens to retard the cure. Then, said Sir Philip, keep this opinion from him; for I would suffer the fear of death to operate on him until he hath performed some necessary acts of justice: Let it only be known to these noblemen, upon whose honour I can rely, and I trust they will approve my request

request to you, Sir.—I join in it, said Lord Clifford, from the same motives.—I insist upon it, said Lord Graham; and I can answer for my surgeon's discretion.—My Lords, said the surgeon, you may depend on my fidelity; and, after what I have just heard, my conscience is engaged in this noble gentleman's behalf, and I will do every thing in my power to second your intentions.—I thank you, Sir, said Sir Philip, and you may depend on my gratitude in return. I presume you will sit up with him to-night; if any danger should arise, I desire to be called immediately; but, otherwise, I would suffer him to rest quietly, that he may be prepared for the business of the following day.—I shall obey your directions, Sir; my necessary attendance will give me a pretence not to leave him, and thus I shall hear all that passes between him and all that visit him.—You will oblige me highly, said Sir Philip, and I shall go to rest with confidence in your care.

The surgeon returned to the sick man's chamber, Sir Philip and the Barons to the company below: They supped in the great hall, with all the gentlemen that were present at the combat. Sir Philip and his Edmund

retired to their repoſe, being heartily fatigued; and the company ſtayed to a late hour, commenting upon the action of the day, praiſing the courage and generoſity of the noble Knight, and wiſhing a good event to his undertaking.

Moſt of Lord Lovel's friends went away as ſoon as they ſaw him ſafely lodged, being aſhamed of him, and of their appearance in his behalf; and the few that ſtayed were induced by their deſire of a further information of the baſe action he had committed, and to juſtify their own characters and conduct.

The next morning Sir Philip entered into conſultation with the two Barons, on the methods he ſhould take to get Edmund received, and acknowledged as heir of the houſe of Lovel. They were all of opinion, that the criminal ſhould be kept in fear till he had ſettled his worldly affairs, and they had reſolved how to diſpoſe of him. With this determination they entered his room, and inquired of the ſurgeon how he had paſſed the night? He ſhook his head, and ſaid but little.

Lord Lovel deſired that he might be removed to his own houſe. Lord Graham

said, he could not consent to that, as there was evident danger in removing him; and appealed to the surgeon, who confirmed his opinion. Lord Graham desired he would make himself easy, and that he should have every kind of assistance there.

Sir Philip then proposed to send for the Lord Fitz-Owen, who would see that all possible care was taken of his brother-in-law, and would assist him in settling his affairs. Lord Lovel was against it; he was peevish and uneasy, and desired to be left with only his own servants to attend him. Sir Philip quitted the room with a significant look; and the two Lords endeavoured to reconcile him to his situation. He interrupted them.—It is easy for men in your situation to advise, but it is difficult for one in mine to practise; wounded in body and mind, it is natural that I should strive to avoid the extremes of shame and punishment: I thank you for your kind offices, and beg I may be left with my own servants.—With them, and the surgeon, you shall, said Lord Graham; and they both retired.

Sir Philip met them below.—My Lords, said he, I am desirous that my Lord Fitz-Owen

Owen should be sent for, and that he may hear his brother's confession; for I suspect that he may hereafter deny, what only the fear of death has extorted from him: With your permission, I am determined to send messengers to-day. They both expressed approbation, and Lord Clifford proposed to write to him, saying, a letter from an impartial person will have the more weight: I will send one of my principal domestics with your own. This measure being resolved upon, Lord Clifford retired to write, and Sir Philip to prepare his servants for instant departure. Edmund desired leave to write to father Oswald, and John Wyatt was ordered to be the bearer of his letter. When the Lord Clifford had finished his letter, he read it to Sir Philip and his chosen friends, as follows:

"Right Hon. my good Lord,

"I have taken upon me to acquaint your "Lordship, that there has been a solemn "combat at arms between your brother-in-"law, the Lord Lovel, and Sir Philip Har-"clay, Knt. of Yorkshire. It was fought in "the jurisdiction of the Lord Graham, who, "with myself, was appointed judge of the "field; it was fairly won, and Sir Philip is

"the conqueror. After he had gained the
"victory, he declared at large the cause of
"the quarrel, and that he had revenged the
"death of Arthur Lord Lovel, his friend,
"whom the present Lord Lovel had assassin-
"ated, that he might enjoy his title and
"estate. The wounded man confessed the
"fact: and Sir Philip gave him his life,
"and only carried off his sword as a trophy
"of his victory. Both the victor and the
"vanquished were conveyed to Lord Gra-
"ham's castle, where the Lord Lovel now
"lies in great danger. He is desirous to
"settle his worldly affairs, and to make his
"peace with God and man. Sir Philip Har-
"clay says, there is a male heir of the house
"of Lovel, for whom he claims the title and
"estate; but he is very desirous that your
"Lordship should be present at the disposal
"of your brother's property, that of right be-
"longs to him, of which your children are
"the undoubted heirs: He also wants to
"consult you in many other points of ho-
"nour and equity. Let me entreat you, on
"the receipt of this letter, to set out imme-
"diately for Lord Graham's castle, where
"you will be received with the utmost re-

" ſpect and hoſpitality. You will hear
" things that will ſurpriſe you as much as
" they do me; you will judge of them with
" that juſtice and honour that ſpeaks your
" character; and you will unite with us in
" wondering at the ways of Providence, and
" ſubmitting to its decrees, in puniſhing the
" guilty, and doing juſtice to the innocent
" and oppreſſed. My beſt wiſhes and prayers
" attend you and your hopeful family. My
" Lord, I remain your humble ſervant,

" CLIFFORD."

Every one preſent expreſſed the higheſt approbation of this letter. Sir Philip gave orders to John Wyatt to be very circumſpect in his behaviour, to give Edmund's letter privately to father Oſwald, and to make no mention of him, or his pretenſions to Lovel Caſtle.

Lord Clifford gave his ſervant the requiſite precautions. Lord Graham added a note of invitation, and ſent it by a ſervant of his own.—As ſoon as all things were ready, the meſſengers ſet out with all ſpeed for the Caſtle of Lovel.

They ſtayed no longer by the way than to take ſome refreſhment, but rode night and day till they arrived there.

Lord Fitz-Owen was in the parlour with his children. Father Oſwald was walking in the avenue before the houſe, when he ſaw three meſſengers, whoſe horſes ſeemed jaded, and the riders fatigued, like men come a long journey. He came up, juſt as the firſt had delivered his meſſage to the porter. John Wyatt knew him, he diſmounted, and made ſigns that he had ſomething to ſay to him; he retired back a few ſteps, and John, with great dexterity, ſlipped a letter into his hand. The father gave him his bleſſing, and a welcome.—Who do you come from? ſaid he aloud.—From the Lords Graham and Clifford, to the Lord Fitz-Owen; and we bring letters of conſequence to the Baron.

Oſwald followed the meſſengers into the hall, a ſervant announced their arrival. Lord Fitz-Owen received them in the parlour: Lord Clifford's ſervant delivered his maſter's letter, Lord Graham's his, and they ſaid they would retire and wait his Lordſhip's anſwer. The Baron ordered them ſome refreſhment. They retired, and he opened his letters: He read

read them with great agitations, he ſtruck his hand upon his heart, he exclaimed——My fears are all verified! the blow is ſtruck, and it has fallen upon the guilty!

Oſwald came in a minute after.—You are come in good time, ſaid the Baron. Read that letter, that my children may know the contents. He read it with faultering voice, and trembling limbs. They were all in great ſurpriſe. William looked down, and kept a ſtudied ſilence. Sir Robert exclaimed—Is it poſſible? can my Uncle be guilty of ſuch an action?—You hear, ſaid the Baron, he has confeſſed it!—But to whom? ſaid Sir Robert.—His father replied, Lord Clifford's honour is unqueſtionable, and I cannot doubt what he affirms.

Sir Robert leaned his head upon his hand, as one loſt in thought: At length he ſeemed to awake—My Lord, I have no doubt that Edmund is at the bottom of this buſineſs. Do you not remember that Sir Philip Harclay long ago promiſed him his friendſhip? Edmund diſappears; and, ſoon after, this man challenges my Uncle. You know what paſſed here before his departure: He has ſuggeſted this affair to Sir Philip, and inſtigated

him to this action. This is the return he has made for the favours he has received from our family, to which he owes every thing.— Softly, my son! said the Baron; let us be cautious of reflecting upon Edmund: There is a greater hand in this business. My conjecture was too true: It was in that fatal apartment that he was made acquainted with the circumstances of Lord Lovel's death; he was, perhaps, enjoined to reveal them to Sir Philip Harclay, the bosom friend of the deceased. The mystery of that apartment is disclosed, the woe to the guilty is accomplished! There is no reflection upon any one; Heaven effects its purposes in its own time and manner. I and mine are innocent; let us worship, and be silent!

But what do you propose to do? said Sir Robert.—To return with the messengers, answered the Baron. I think it highly proper that I should see your Uncle, and hear what he has to say: My children are his heirs; in justice to them, I ought to be acquainted with every thing that concerns the disposal of his fortune.—Your Lordship is in the right, answered Sir Robert, it concerns us all. I have only to ask your permission to bear you company.

pany.—With all my heart, ſaid the Baron: I have only to aſk of you in return, that you will command yourſelf, and not ſpeak your mind haſtily; wait for the proofs before you give judgment, and take advice of your reaſon before you decide upon any thing: if you reflect upon the paſt, you will find reaſon to diſtruſt yourſelf. Leave all to me, and be aſſured I will protect your honour and my own.—I will obey you in all things, my Lord; and will make immediate preparation for our departure. So ſaying, he left the room.

As ſoon as he was gone, Mr. William broke ſilence.—My Lord, ſaid he, if you have no great objection, I beg leave alſo to accompany you both.—You ſhall, my ſon, if you deſire it; I think I can ſee your motives, and your brother's alſo; your coolneſs will be a good balance to his warmth: You ſhall go with us. My ſon Walter ſhall be his ſiſter's protector in our abſence, and he ſhall be maſter here till we return.—I hope, my dear father, that will not be long; I ſhall not be happy till you come home, ſaid the fair Emma.—It ſhall be no longer, my deareſt, than till this untoward affair is ſettled.

The Baron desired to know when the messengers were expected to return. Oswald took this opportunity to retire; he went to his own apartment, and read the letter, as follows:

"The Heir of Lovel, to his dear and reverend friend, father Oswald.

"Let my friends at the Castle of Lovel know that I live in hopes one day to see them there. If you could by any means return with the messengers, your testimony would add weight to mine; perhaps you might obtain permission to attend the Baron: I leave it to you to manage this. John Wyatt will inform you of all that has passed here, and that hitherto my success has outrun my expectation, and, almost, my wishes. I am in the high road to my inheritance; and trust that the Power who hath conducted me thus far, will not leave his work unfinished. Tell my beloved William, that I live, and hope to embrace him before long. I recommend myself to your holy prayers and blessing, and remain your son and servant,

"EDMUND."

Oswald

Oſwald then went to the meſſengers; he drew John Wyatt to a diſtance from the reſt, and got the information he wanted: He ſtayed with him till he was ſent for by the Baron, to whom he went directly, and prevented his queſtions, by ſaying,—I have been talking with the meſſengers: I find they have travelled night and day to bring the letters with all ſpeed; they only require one night's reſt, and will be ready to ſet out with you to-morrow.—'Tis well, ſaid the Baron; we will ſet out as ſoon as they are ready.—My Lord, ſaid Oſwald, I have a favour to beg of you; it is, that I may attend you: I have ſeen the progreſs of this wonderful diſcovery, and I have a great deſire to ſee the concluſion of it; perhaps my preſence may be of ſervice in the courſe of your buſineſs.—Perhaps it may, ſaid the Baron; I have no objection, if you deſire to go.—They then ſeparated, and went to prepare for their journey.

Oſwald had a private interview with Joſeph, whom he informed of all that he knew, and his reſolution to attend the Baron in his journey to the north.—I go, ſaid he, to bear witneſs in behalf of injured innocence: If it be needful, I ſhall call upon you; therefore

hold yourſelf in readineſs in caſe you ſhould be ſent for.—That I will, ſaid Joſeph, and ſpend my laſt remains of life and ſtrength, to help my young Lord to his right and title; but do they not begin to ſuſpect who is the Heir of Lovel?—Not in the leaſt, ſaid Oſwald; they think him concerned in the diſcovery, but have no idea of his being intereſted in the event.—Oh, father! ſaid Joſeph, I ſhall think every day a week till your return; but I will no longer keep you from your repoſe.—Good night, ſaid Oſwald; but I have another viſit to pay before I go to reſt.

He left Joſeph, and went on tip-toe to Mr. William's room, and tapped at his door; he came and opened it.—What news, father?—Not much; I have only orders to tell you that Edmund is well, and as much your friend as ever.—I gueſſed, ſaid William, that we ſhould hear ſomething of him: I have ſtill another gueſs.—What is that, my child?—That we ſhall ſee or hear of him where we are going.—It is very likely, ſaid Oſwald; and I would have you be prepared for it: I am confident we ſhall hear nothing to his diſcredit.—I am certain of that, ſaid William, and I ſhall rejoice to ſee him: I conclude that he is under the

the protection of Sir Philip Harclay.—He is so, said Oswald; I had my information from Sir Philip's servant, who is one of the messengers, and was guide to the others in their way hither. After some further conversation they separated, and each went to his repose.

The next morning the whole party set out on their journey; they travelled by easy stages on account of the Baron's health, which began to be impaired, and arrived in health and spirits at the castle of Lord Graham, where they were received with the utmost respect and kindness by the noble Master.

The Lord Lovel had recovered his health and strength as much as possible in the time, and was impatient to be gone from thence to his own house. He was surprised to hear of the arrival of his brother and nephews, and expressed no pleasure at the thoughts of seeing them. When Sir Philip Harclay came to pay his respects to Baron Fitz-Owen, the latter received him with civility, but with a coldness that was apparent. Sir Robert left the room, doubting his resolution. Sir Philip advanced, and took the Baron by the hand. —My Lord, said he, I rejoice to see you here.

I cannot

I cannot be ſatisfied with the bare civilities of ſuch a man as you. I aſpire to your eſteem, to your friendſhip, and I ſhall not be happy till I obtain them. I will make you the judge of every part of my conduct, and where you ſhall condemn me, I will condemn myſelf.

The Baron was ſoftened, his noble heart felt its alliance with its counterpart, but he thought the ſituation of his brother demanded ſome reſerve towards the man who ſought his life; but, in ſpite of himſelf, it wore off every moment. Lord Clifford related all that had paſſed, with the due regard to Sir Philip's honour; he remarked how nobly he concealed the cauſe of his reſentment againſt the Lord Lovel till the day of combat, that he might not prepoſſeſs the judges againſt him. He enlarged on his humanity to the vanquiſhed, on the deſire he expreſſed to have juſtice done to his heirs; finally, he mentioned his great reſpect for the Lord Fitz-Owen, and the ſolicitude he ſhewed to have him come to ſettle the eſtate of the ſick man in favour of his children. Lord Clifford alſo employed his ſon to ſoften Sir Robert, and to explain

explain to him every doubtful part of Sir Philip's behaviour.

After the travellers had taken fome reft, the Lord Graham propofed that they fhould make a vifit to the fick man's chamber. The Lords fent to acquaint him they were coming to vifit him, and they followed the meffenger. The Lord Fitz-Owen went up to the bedfide; he embraced his brother with ftrong emotions of concern. Sir Robert followed him; then Mr. William. Lord Lovel embraced them, but faid nothing; his countenance fhewed his inward agitations.—Lord Fitz-Owen firft broke filence.—I hope, faid he, I fee my brother better than I expected.—Lord Lovel bit his fingers, he pulled the bed-clothes, he feemed almoft diftracted; at length he broke out —I owe no thanks to thofe who fent for my relations! Sir Philip Harclay, you have ufed ungeneroufly the advantage you have gained over me! you fpared my life, only to take away my reputation. You have expofed me to ftrangers, and, what is worfe, to my deareft friends; when I lay in a ftate of danger, you obliged me to fay any thing, and now you take advantage of it, to ruin me in my friends

affection:

affection: But, if I recover, you may repent it!

Sir Philip then came forward.—My Lords, I ſhall take no notice of what this unhappy man has juſt now ſaid; I ſhall appeal to you, as to the honourable witneſſes of all that has paſſed: You ſee it was no more than neceſſary. I appeal to you for the motives of my treatment of him, before, at, and after our meeting. I did not take his life, as I might have done; I wiſhed him to repent of his ſins, and to make reſtitution of what he unjuſtly poſſeſſes. I was called out to do an act of juſtice; I had taken the heir of Lovel under my protection, my chief view was to ſee juſtice done to him; what regarded this man was but a ſecondary motive. This was my end, and I will never, never loſe ſight of it.

Lord Lovel ſeemed almoſt choked with paſſion, to ſee every one giving ſome mark of approbation and reſpect to Sir Philip. He called out,—I demand to know who is this pretended heir, whom he brings out to claim my title and fortune?—My noble auditors, ſaid Sir Philip, I ſhall appeal to your judgment, in regard to the proofs of my ward's

birth

birth and family; every circumſtance ſhall be laid before you, and you ſhall decide upon them.

Here is a young man, ſuppoſed the ſon of a peaſant, who, by a train of circumſtances that could not have happened by human contrivance, diſcovers not only who were his real parents, but that they came to untimely deaths. He even diſcovers the different places where their bones are buried, both out of conſecrated ground, and appeals to their aſhes for the truth of his pretenſions. He has alſo living proofs to offer, that will convince the moſt incredulous. I have deferred entering into particulars, till the arrival of Baron Fitz-Owen; I know his noble heart and honourable character, from one that has long been an eye-witneſs of his goodneſs; ſuch is the opinion I have of his juſtice, that I will accept him as one of the judges in his brother's cauſe. I and my ward will bring our proofs before him, and the company here preſent; in the courſe of them, it will appear that he is the beſt qualified of any to judge of them, becauſe he can aſcertain many of the facts we ſhall have occaſion to mention: I will reſt our cauſe upon their deciſion.

Lord

Lord Graham applauded Sir Philip's appeal, affirming his own impartiality, and calling upon Lord Clifford and his ſon, and alſo his own nephews who were preſent. Lord Clifford ſaid, Sir Philip offers fairly, and like himſelf; there can be no place nor perſons more impartial than the preſent, and I preſume the Lord Lovel can have no objection.—No objection! anſwered he; what, to be tried like a criminal, to have judges appointed over me, to decide upon my right to my own eſtate and title? I will not ſubmit to ſuch a juriſdiction!—Then, ſaid Sir Philip, you had rather be tried by the laws of the land, and have them pronounce ſentence upon you? Take your choice, Sir; if you refuſe the one, you ſhall be certain of the other. Lord Clifford then ſaid,—You will allow Lord Lovel to conſider of the propoſal; he will conſult his friends, and be determined by their advice. Lord Fitz-Owen ſaid,—I am very much ſurpriſed at what I have heard. I ſhould be glad to know all that Sir Philip Harclay has to ſay for his ward, that I may judge what my brother has to hope or fear; I will then give my beſt advice, or offer my mediation, as he may ſtand in need of them.—You ſay well, replied

Lord

Lord Graham; and pray let us come directly to the point: Sir Philip, you will introduce your ward to this company, and enter upon your proofs.

Sir Philip bowed to the company; he went out and brought in Edmund, encouraging him by the way; he presented him to Baron Fitz-Owen, who looked very serious—Edmund Twyford, said he, are you the heir of the house of Lovel?—I am, my Lord, said Edmund, bowing to the ground; the proofs will appear; but I am, at the same time, the most humble and grateful of all your servants, and the servant of your virtues. Sir Robert rose up, and was going to leave the room.—Son Robert, stay, said the Baron: If there is any fraud, you will be pleased to detect it, and, if all that is affirmed be true, you will not shut your eyes against the light; you are concerned in this business; hear it in silence, and let reason be arbiter in your cause. He bowed to his father, bit his lip, and retired to the window. William nodded to Edmund, and was silent. All the company had their eyes fixed on the young man, who stood in the midst, casting down his eyes with modest respect to the audience; while

Sir

Sir Philip related all the material circumſtances of his life, the wonderful gradation by which he came to the knowledge of his birth, the adventures of the haunted apartment, the diſcovery of the fatal cloſet, and the preſumptive proofs that Lord Lovel was buried there. At this part of his narration, Lord Fitz-Owen interrupted him—Where is this cloſet you talk of? for I and my ſons went over the apartment ſince Edmund's departure, and found no ſuch place as you deſcribe.—My Lord, ſaid Edmund, I can account for it; the door is covered with tapeſtry, the ſame as the room, and you might eaſily overlook it; but I have a witneſs here, ſaid he, and putting his hand into his boſom, he drew out the key. If this is not the key of that cloſet, let me be deemed an impoſtor, and all I ſay a falſehood; I will riſk my pretenſions upon this proof.

And for what purpoſe did you take it away? ſaid the Baron.—To prevent any perſon from going into it, replied Edmund; I have vowed to keep it till I ſhall open that cloſet before witneſſes appointed for that purpoſe.—Proceed, Sir, ſaid the Baron Fitz-Owen.—Sir Philip then related the converſation between

Edmund

Edmund and Margery Twyford, his supposed mother.—Lord Fitz-Owen seemed in the utmost surprise: He exclaimed,—Can this be true? strange discovery! unfortunate child!—Edmund's tears bore witness to his veracity; he was obliged to hide his face, he lifted up his clasped hands to Heaven, and was in great emotions during all this part of the relation; while Lord Lovel groaned, and seemed in great agitation.

Sir Philip then addressed himself to Lord Fitz-Owen. My Lord, there was another person present at the conversation between Edmund and his foster-mother, who can witness to all that passed; perhaps your Lordship can tell who that was?—It was father Oswald, replied the Baron; I well remember that he went with him at his request; let him be called in. He was sent for, and came immediately. The Baron desired him to relate all that passed between Edmund and his mother.

Oswald then began.—Since I am now properly called upon to testify what I know concerning this young man, I will speak the truth, without fear or favour of any one; and I will swear, by the rules of my holy

order,

order, to the truth of what I ſhall relate. He then gave a particular account of all that paſſed on that occaſion, and mentioned the tokens found on both the infant and his mother.—Where are theſe tokens to be ſeen? ſaid the Lord Clifford.—I have them here, my Lord, ſaid Edmund, and I keep them as my greateſt treaſures. He then produced them before all the company.—There is no appearance of any fraud or colluſion, ſaid Lord Graham; if any man thinks he ſees any, let him ſpeak.—Pray, my Lord, ſuffer me to ſpeak a word, ſaid Sir Robert. Do you remember that I hinted my ſuſpicions concerning father Oſwald, the night our kinſmen lay in the eaſt apartment?—I do, ſaid the Baron.—Well, Sir, now appears that he did know more than he would tell us; you find he is very deep in all Edmund's ſecrets, and you may judge what were his motives for undertaking this journey.—I obſerve what you ſay, anſwered his father, but let us hear all that Oſwald has to ſay: I will be as impartial as poſſible.—My Lord, returned Oſwald, I beg you alſo to recollect what I ſaid, on the night your ſon ſpeaks of, concerning ſecrecy in certain matters.—I remember that alſo,

also, said the Baron; but proceed.—My Lord, continued Oswald, I knew more than I thought myself at liberty to disclose at that time; but I will now tell you every thing. I saw there was something more than common in the accidents that befell this young man, and in his being called out to sleep in the east apartment; I earnestly desired him to let me be with him on the second night, to which he consented reluctantly; we heard a great noise in the rooms underneath, we went down stairs together; I saw him open the fatal closet; I heard groans that pierced me to the heart, I kneeled down and prayed for the repose of the spirit departed; I found a seal, with the arms of Lovel engraven upon it, which I gave to Edmund, and he now has it in his possession: He enjoined me to keep secret what I had seen and heard, till the time should come to declare it. I conceived that I was called to be a witness of these things; besides, my curiosity was excited to know the event; I, therefore, desired to be present at the interview between him and his mother, which was affecting beyond expression: I heard what I have now declared as nearly as my memory permits me. I hope

no

no impartial perſon will blame me for any part of my conduct; but if they ſhould, I do not repent it: If I ſhould forfeit the favour of the rich and great, I ſhall have acquitted myſelf to God and my conſcience. I have no worldly ends to anſwer; I plead the cauſe of the injured orphan; and I think, alſo, that I ſecond the deſigns of Providence.—You have well ſpoken, father, ſaid the Lord Clifford; your teſtimony is indeed of conſequence.

It is amazing and convincing, ſaid Lord Graham; and the whole ſtory is ſo well connected, that I can ſee nothing to make us doubt the truth of it: But let us examine the proofs. Edmund gave into their hands the necklace and ear-rings; he ſhewed them the locket with the cypher of Lovel, and the ſeal with the arms; he told them the cloak in which he was wrapped was in the cuſtody of his foſter-mother, who would produce it on demand. He begged that ſome proper perſons might be commiſſioned to go with him to examine whether or no the bodies of his parents were buried where he affirmed; adding, that he put his pretenſions into their hands with pleaſure, relying entirely upon their honour and juſtice.

During

During this interesting scene, the criminal covered his face, and was silent; but he sent forth bitter sighs and groans that denoted the anguish of his heart. At length, Lord Graham, in compassion to him, proposed that they should retire and consider of the proofs; adding, Lord Lovel must needs be fatigued; we will resume the subject in his presence, when he is disposed to receive us. Sir Philip Harclay approached the bed: Sir, said he, I now leave you in the hands of your own relations; they are men of strict honour, and I confide in them to take care of you, and of your concerns. They then went out of the room, leaving only the Lord Fitz-Owen and his sons with the criminal. They discoursed of the wonderful story of Edmund's birth, and the principal events of his life.

After dinner, Sir Philip requested another conference with the Lords, and their principal friends. There were present also, father Oswald, and Lord Graham's confessor, who had taken the Lord Lovel's confession, Edmund, and Zadisky. Now, gentlemen, said Sir Philip, I desire to know your opinion of our proofs, and your advice upon them.

Lord Graham replied, I am desired to speak for the rest: We think there are strong pre-

ſumptive proofs that this young man is the true heir of Lovel; but they ought to be confirmed and authenticated. Of the murder of the late Lord there is no doubt; the criminal hath confeſſed it, and the circumſtances confirm it; the proofs of his crime are ſo connected with thoſe of the young man's birth, that one cannot be public without the other. We are deſirous to do juſtice; and yet are unwilling, for the Lord Fitz-Owen's ſake, to bring the criminal to public ſhame and puniſhment. We wiſh to find out a medium; we therefore deſire Sir Philip to make propoſals for his ward, and let Lord Fitz-Owen anſwer for himſelf and his brother, and we will be moderators between them. Here every one expreſſed approbation, and called upon Sir Philip to make his demands.

If, ſaid he, I were to demand ſtrict juſtice, I ſhould not be ſatisfied with any thing leſs than the life of the criminal; but I am a Chriſtian ſoldier, the diſciple of him who came into the world to ſave ſinners; for his ſake, continued he (croſſing himſelf) I forego my revenge, I ſpare the guilty: If Heaven gives him time for repentance, man ſhould not deny it. It is my ward's particular requeſt, that I will not bring ſhame upon the houſe of his

benefactor,

benefactor, the Lord Fitz-Owen, for whom he hath a filial affection and profound veneration. My proposals are these: First, that the criminal make restitution of the title and estate, obtained with so much injustice and cruelty, to the lawful heir, whom he shall acknowledge such before proper witnesses. Secondly, that he shall surrender his own lawful inheritance and personal estate into the hands of the Lord Fitz-Owen, in trust for his sons, who are his heirs of blood. Thirdly, that he shall retire into a religious house, or else quit the kingdom in three months time; and, in either case, those who enjoy his fortune shall allow him a decent annuity, that he may not want the comforts of life. By the last, I disable him from the means of doing further mischief, and enable him to devote the remainder of his days to penitence. These are my proposals, and I give him four-and-twenty hours to consider of them; if he refuses to comply with them, I shall be obliged to proceed to severer measures, and to a public prosecution: But the goodness of the Lord Fitz-Owen bids me expect, from his influence with his brother, a compliance with proposals made out of respect to his honourable character.

Lord Graham applauded the humanity, prudence, and piety of Sir Philip's propofals. He enforced them with all his influence and eloquence. Lord Clifford feconded him; and the reft gave tokens of approbation. Sir Robert Fitz-Owen then rofe up—I beg leave to obferve to the company, who are going to difpofe fo generoufly of another man's property, that my father purchafed the caftle and eftate of the houfe of Lovel: Who is to repay him the money for it?

Sir Philip then faid, I have alfo a queftion to afk. Who is to pay the arrears of my ward's eftate, which he has unjuftly been kept out of thefe one-and-twenty years? Let Lord Clifford anfwer to both points, for he is not interefted in either.—Lord Clifford fmiled—I think, returned he, the firft queftion is anfwered by the fecond, and that the parties concerned fhould fet one againft the other, efpecially as Lord Fitz-Owen's children will inherit the fortune, which includes the purchafe-money. Lord Graham faid, This determination is both equitable and generous, and I hope will anfwer the expectations on all fides. —I have another propofal to make to my Lord Fitz-

Fitz-Owen, said Sir Philip; but I first wait for the acceptance of those already made.—Lord Fitz-Owen replied, I shall report them to my brother, and acquaint the company with his resolution to-morrow.

They then separated; and the Baron, with his sons, returned to the sick man's chamber; there he exhorted his brother, with the piety of a confessor, to repent of his sins, and make atonement for them. He made known Sir Philip's proposals, and observed on the wonderful discovery of his crime, and the punishment that followed it. Your repentance, continued he, may be accepted, and your crime may yet be pardoned: If you continue refractory, and refuse to make atonement, you will draw down upon you a severer punishment. The criminal would not confess, and yet could not deny, the truth and justice of his observations. The Baron spent several hours in his brother's chamber; he sent for a priest, who took his confession; and they both sat up with him all night, advising, persuading, and exhorting him to do justice, and to comply with the proposals. He was unwilling to give up the world, and yet more so to

become the object of public ſhame, diſgrace, and puniſhment.

The next day Lord Fitz-Owen ſummoned the company into his brother's chamber, and there declared, in his name, that he accepted Sir Philip Harclay's propoſals; that, if the young man could, as he promiſed, direct them to the places where his parents were buried, and if his birth ſhould be authenticated by his foſter-parents, he ſhould be acknowledged the heir of the houſe of Lovel. That, to be certified of theſe things, they muſt commiſſion proper perſons to go with him for this purpoſe; and, in caſe the truth ſhould be made plain, they ſhould immediately put him in poſſeſſion of the caſtle and eſtate, in the ſtate it was. He deſired Lord Graham and Lord Clifford to chuſe the commiſſioners, and gave Sir Philip and Edmund a right to add to them, each, another perſon.

Lord Graham named the eldeſt ſon of Lord Clifford; and the other, in return, named his nephew; they alſo choſe the prieſt, Lord Graham's confeſſor, and the eldeſt ſon of Baron Fitz-Owen, to his great mortification. Sir Philip appointed Mr. William Fitz-

Owen,

Owen, and Edmund named father Oſwald; they choſe out the ſervants to attend them, who were alſo to be witneſſes of all that ſhould paſs. Lord Clifford propoſed to Baron Fitz-Owen, that, as ſoon as the commiſſioners were ſet out, the remainder of the company ſhould adjourn to his ſeat in Cumberland, whither Lord Graham ſhould be invited to accompany them, and to ſtay till this affair was decided. After ſome debate, this was agreed to; and, at the ſame time, that the criminal ſhould be kept with them till every thing was properly ſettled.

Lord Fitz-Owen gave his ſon William the charge to receive and entertain the commiſſioners at the caſtle: But, before they ſet out, Sir Philip had a conference with Lord Fitz-Owen, concerning the ſurrender of the Caſtle; in which he inſiſted on the furniture and ſtock of the farm, in conſideration of the arrears. Lord Fitz-Owen ſlightly mentioned the young man's education and expences. Sir Philip anſwered, you are right, my Lord, I had not thought of this point; we owe you, in this reſpect, more than we can ever repay:

But you know not half the reſpect and affection Edmund bears for you. When reſtitution of his title and fortune are fully made, his happineſs will ſtill depend on you. How on me? ſaid the Baron.—Why, he will not be happy unleſs you honour him with your notice and eſteem; but this is not all, I muſt hope that you will ſtill do more for him.—Indeed, ſaid the Baron, he has put my regard for him to a ſevere proof; what further can he expect from me?—My dear Lord, be not offended, I have only one more propoſal to make to you; if you refuſe it, I can allow for you; and I confeſs it requires a greatneſs of mind, but not more than you poſſeſs, to grant it.—Well, Sir, ſpeak your demand.—Say rather my requeſt; it is this caſe: Ceaſe to look upon Edmund as the enemy of your houſe; look upon him as a ſon, and make him ſo indeed.—How ſay you, Sir Philip? my ſon!—Yes, my Lord, give him your daughter: He is already your ſon in filial affection; your ſon William and he are ſworn brothers; what remains but to make him yours? He deſerves ſuch a parent, you ſuch a ſon; and

you

you will, by this means, ingraft into your family, the name, title, and estate of Lovel, which will be entailed on your posterity for ever. This offer requires much consideration, returned the Baron.—Suffer me to suggest some hints to you, said Sir Philip. This match is, I think, verily pointed out by Providence, which hath conducted the dear boy through so many dangers, and brought him within view of his happiness; look on him as the precious relic of a noble house, the son of my dearest friend! or look on him as my son and heir, and let me, as his father, implore you to consent to his marriage with your daughter. The Baron's heart was touched, he turned away his face.—Oh, Sir Philip Harclay, what a friend are you! why should such a man be our enemy?——My Lord, said Sir Philip, we are not, cannot be enemies; our hearts are already allied; and I am certain we shall one day be dear friends. The Baron suppressed his emotions, but Sir Philip saw into his heart. I must consult my eldest son, returned he.—Then, replied Sir Philip, I foresee much difficulty; he is prejudiced against Edmund, and thinks the restitution of his inheritance an injury to your family:

Hereafter he will ſee this alliance in a different light, and will rejoice that ſuch a brother is added to the family; but, at preſent, he will ſet his face againſt it. However, we will not deſpair; virtue and reſolution will ſurmount all obſtacles. Let me call in young Lovel.

He brought Edmund to the Baron, and acquainted him with the propoſal he had been making in his name, my Lord's anſwers, and the objections he feared on the part of Sir Robert. Edmund kneeled to the Baron; he took his hand and preſſed it to his lips. Beſt of men! of parents! of patrons! ſaid he, I will ever be your ſon in filial affection, whether I have the honour to be legally ſo or not; not one of your own children can feel a ſtronger ſenſe of love and duty.—Tell me, ſaid the Baron, do you love my daughter?—I do, my Lord, with the moſt ardent affection; I never loved any woman but her; and, if I am ſo unfortunate as to be refuſed her, I will not marry at all. Oh, my Lord, reject not my honeſt ſuit! Your alliance will give me conſequence with myſelf, it will excite me to act worthy of the ſtation to which

I am

I am exalted; if you refuſe me, I ſhall ſeem an abject wretch, diſdained by thoſe whom my heart claims relation to: Your family are the whole world to me. Give me your lovely daughter! give me alſo your ſon, my beloved William; and let me ſhare with them the fortune Providence beſtows upon me: but what is title or fortune, if I am deprived of the ſociety of thoſe I love?

Edmund, ſaid the Baron, you have a noble friend; but you have a ſtronger in my heart, which I think was implanted there by Heaven to aid its own purpoſes: I feel a variety of emotions of different kinds, and am afraid to truſt my own heart with you. But anſwer me a queſtion; Are you aſſured of my daughter's conſent? have you ſolicited her favour? have you gained her affections?—Never, my Lord! I am incapable of ſo baſe an action: I have loved her at an humble diſtance; but, in my ſituation, I ſhould have thought it a violation of all the laws of gratitude and hoſpitality to have preſumed to ſpeak the ſentiments of my heart.—Then you have acted with unqueſtionable honour on this, and I muſt ſay, on all other occaſions.—Your approbation, my

Lord, is the firſt wiſh of my life; it is the ſeal of my honour and happineſs.

Sir Philip ſmiled: My Lord Fitz-Owen, I am jealous of Edmund's preferable regard for you; it is juſt the ſame now as formerly. Edmund came to Sir Philip, he threw himſelf into his arms, he wept, he was overpowered with the feelings of his heart; he prayed to Heaven to ſtrengthen his mind to ſupport his inexpreſſible ſenſations. I am overwhelmed with obligation! ſaid he; oh, beſt of friends, teach me, like you, to make my actions ſpeak for me!—Enough, Edmund; I know your heart, and that is my ſecurity. My Lord, ſpeak to him, and bring him to himſelf, by behaving coldly to him, if you can. The Baron ſaid, I muſt not truſt myſelf with you, you make a child of me! I will only add, Gain my ſon Robert's favour, and be aſſured of mine: I owe ſome reſpect to the heir of my family; he is brave, honeſt, and ſincere; your enemies are ſeparated from him, you have William's influence in your behalf; make one effort, and let me know the reſult. Edmund kiſſed his hand in tranſports of joy and gratitude.—I will not loſe a moment, ſaid he; I fly to obey your commands.

Edmund went immediately to his friend William, and related all that had passed between the Baron, Sir Philip, and himself. William promised him his interest in the warmest manner: He recapitulated all that had passed in the Castle since his departure; but he guarded his sister's delicacy, till it should be resolved to give way to his address. They both consulted young Clifford, who had conceived an affection to Edmund for his amiable qualities, and to William for his generous friendship for him. He promised them his assistance, as Sir Robert seemed desirous to cultivate his friendship. Accordingly, they both attacked him with the whole artillery of friendship and persuasion. Clifford urged the merits of Edmund, and the advantages of his alliance: William enforced his arguments by a retrospect of Edmund's past life; and observed, that every obstacle thrown in his way had brought his enemies to shame, and increase of honour to himself.—I say nothing, continued he, of his noble qualities and affectionate heart; those who have been so many years his companions, can want no proofs of it.—We know your attachment to him, Sir, said Sir Robert; and, in consequence,

quence, your partiality.——Nay, replied William, you are ſenſible of the truth of my aſſertions; and, I am confident, would have loved him yourſelf, but for the inſinuations of his enemies: But if he ſhould make good his aſſertions, even you muſt be convinced of his veracity.—And you would have my father give him your ſiſter upon this uncertainty?—No, Sir, but upon theſe conditions.—But ſuppoſe he does not make them good?—Then I will be of your party, and give up his intereſt.—Very well, Sir; my father may do as he pleaſes; but I cannot agree to give my ſiſter to one who has always ſtood in the way of our family, and now turns us out of our own houſe.

I am ſorry, brother, you ſee his pretenſions in ſo wrong a light; but if you think there is any impoſture in the caſe, go with us, and be a witneſs of all that paſſes.—No, not I; if Edmund is to be maſter of the Caſtle, I will never more ſet my foot in it.—This matter, ſaid Mr. Clifford, muſt be left to time, which has brought ſtranger things to paſs. Sir Robert's honour and good ſenſe will enable him to ſubdue his prejudices, and to judge impartially. They took leave, and went to make preparations for their journey.

Edmund

Edmund made his report of Sir Robert's inflexibility to his father, in presence of Sir Philip; who, again, ventured to urge the Baron on his favourite subject.—It becomes me to wait for the further proofs, said he; but, if they are as clear as I expect, I will not be inexorable to your wishes: Say nothing more on this subject till the return of the commissioners. They were profuse in their acknowledgments of his goodness.

Edmund took a tender leave of his two paternal friends:—When, said he, I take possession of my inheritance, I must hope for the company of you both to complete my happiness.—Of me, said Sir Philip, you may be certain; and, as far as my influence reaches, of the Baron.—He was silent. Edmund assured them of his constant prayers for their happiness.

Soon after, the commissioners, with Edmund, set out for Lovel Castle; and the following day the Lord Clifford set out for his own house, with Baron Fitz-Owen and his son. The nominal Baron was carried with them, very much against his will. Sir Philip Harclay was invited to go with them by Lord Clifford, who declared his presence necessary

ceſſary to bring things to a concluſion. They all joined in acknowledging their obligations to Lord Graham's generous hoſpitality, and beſought him to accompany them; at length he conſented, on condition they would allow him to go to and fro, as his duty ſhould call him.

Lord Clifford received them with the greateſt hoſpitality, and preſented them to his Lady, and three daughters, who were in the bloom of youth and beauty. They ſpent their time very pleaſantly, excepting the criminal, who continued gloomy and reſerved, and declined company.

In the mean time, the commiſſioners proceeded on their journey. When they were within a day's diſtance from the Caſtle, Mr. William and his ſervant put forward, and arrived ſeveral hours before the reſt, to make preparations for their reception. His ſiſter and brother received them with open arms, and inquired eagerly after the event of the journey to the North. He gave them a brief account of every thing that had happened to their uncle; adding, but this is not all: Sir Philip Harclay has brought a young man who he pretends is the ſon of the late Lord Lovel, and

and claims his estate and title. This person is on his journey hither, with several others who are commissioned to inquire into certain particulars, to confirm his pretensions:—If he make good his claim, my father will surrender the Castle and estate into his hands.—Sir Philip and my Lord have many points to settle; and he has proposed a compromise, that you, my sister, ought to know, because it nearly concerns you.—Me! brother William; pray explain yourself.—Why, he proposes that, in lieu of arrears and other expectations, my father shall give his dear Emma to the heir of Lovel, in full of all demands.—She changed colour:—Holy Mary! said she; and does my father agree to this proposal?—He is not very averse to it; but Sir Robert refuses his consent: However, I have given him my interest with you.—Have you indeed? What! a stranger, perhaps an impostor, who comes to turn us out of our dwelling?—Have patience, my Emma! see this young man without prejudice, and perhaps you will like him as well as I do.—I am surprised at you, William!—Dear Emma, I cannot bear to see you uneasy. Think of the man who of all others you would wish to see in a situ-

ation

ation to aſk you of your father, and expect to ſee your wiſhes realized.—Impoſſible! ſaid ſhe!—Nothing is impoſſible, my dear; let us be prudent and all will end happily. You muſt help me to receive and entertain theſe commiſſioners. I expect a very ſolemn ſcene; but when that is once got over, happier hours than the paſt will ſucceed. We ſhall firſt viſit the haunted apartment; you, my ſiſter, will keep in your own till I ſhall ſend for you. I go now to give orders to the ſervants. He went and ordered them to be in waiting; and himſelf, and his youngeſt brother, ſtood in readineſs to receive them.

The ſound of the horn announced the arrival of the commiſſioners; at the ſame inſtant a ſudden guſt of wind aroſe, and the outward gates flew open. They entered the court-yard, and the great folding-doors into the hall were opened without any aſſiſtance. The moment Edmund entered the hall, every door in the houſe flew open; the ſervants all ruſhed into the hall, and fear was written on their countenances: Joſeph only was undaunted.—Theſe doors, ſaid he, open of their own accord to receive their maſter! this is he indeed! Edmund was ſoon appriſed of what had

had happened.—I accept the omen! ſaid he. Gentlemen, let us go forward to the apartment! let us finiſh the work of fate! I will lead the way. He went on to the apartment, followed by all preſent.—Open the ſhutters, ſaid he, the day-light ſhall no longer be excluded here; the deeds of darkneſs ſhall now be brought to light.

They deſcended the ſtaircaſe; every door was open, till they came to the fatal cloſet. Edmund called to Mr. William:—Approach, my friend, and behold, the door your family overlooked! They came forward; he drew the key out of his boſom, and unlocked the door; he made them obſerve that the boards were all looſe; he then called to the ſervants, and bid them remove every thing out of the cloſet. While they were doing this, Edmund ſhewed them the breaſt-plate all ſtained with blood; he then called to Joſeph:—Do you know whoſe was this ſuit of armour?—It was my Lord's, ſaid Joſeph; the late Lord Lovel; I have ſeen him wear it.

Edmund bade them bring ſhovels and remove the earth. While they were gone, he deſired Oſwald to repeat all that paſſed the night they ſat up together in that apartment,

which

which he did till the ſervants returned. They threw out the earth, while the by-ſtanders in ſolemn ſilence waited the event. After ſome time and labour they ſtruck againſt ſomething. They proceeded till they diſcovered a large trunk, which with ſome difficulty they drew out. It had been corded round, but the cords were rotted to duſt. They opened it, and found a ſkeleton which appeared to have been tied neck and heels together, and forced into the trunk.—Behold, ſaid Edmund, the bones of him to whom I owe my birth! The prieſt from Lord Graham's advanced.—This is undoubtedly the body of the Lord Lovel; I heard his kinſman confeſs the manner in which he was interred. Let this awful ſpectacle be a leſſon to all preſent, that though wickedneſs may triumph for a ſeaſon, a day of retribution will come! Oſwald exclaimed, —Behold the day of retribution! of triumph to the innocent, of ſhame and confuſion to the wicked.

The young gentlemen declared that Edmund had made good his aſſertions; what then, ſaid they, remains? I propoſe, ſaid Lord Graham's prieſt, that an account be written of this diſcovery, and ſigned by all the

the witnesses present; that an attested copy be left in the hands of this gentleman, and the original be sent to the Barons and Sir Philip Harclay, to convince them of the truth of it.

Mr. Clifford then desired Edmund to proceed in his own way.—The first thing I propose to do, said he, is to have a coffin made for these honoured remains; I trust to find the bones of my other parent, and to inter them all together in consecrated ground. Unfortunate pair! you shall at last rest together! your son shall pay the last duties to your ashes! He stopped to shed tears, and none present but paid this tribute to their misfortunes. Edmund recovered his voice and proceeded—My next request is, that father Oswald and this reverend father, with whoever else the gentlemen shall appoint, will send for Andrew and Margery Twyford, and examine them concerning the circumstances of my birth, and the death and burial of my unfortunate mother.—It shall be done, said Mr. William; but first let me entreat you to come with me and take some refreshment after your journey, for you must be fatigued: After dinner we will proceed in the inquiry.

They

They all followed him into the great hall, where they were entertained with great hoſpitality, and Mr. William did the honours in his father's name. Edmund's heart was deeply affected, and the ſolemnity of his deportment bore witneſs to his ſincerity; but it was a manly ſorrow, that did not make him neglect his duty to his friends or himſelf. He inquired after the health of the Lady Emma. —She is well, ſaid William, and as much your friend as ever. Edmund bowed in ſilence.

After dinner the commiſſioners ſent for Andrew and his wife. They examined them ſeparately, and found their accounts agreed together, and were in ſubſtance the ſame as Oſwald and Edmund had before related, ſeparately alſo. The commiſſioners obſerved, that there could be no colluſion between them, and that the proofs were indiſputable. They kept the foſter parents all night; and the next day Andrew directed them to the place where the Lady Lovel was buried, between two trees which he had marked for a memorial. They collected the bones and carried them to the Caſtle, where Edmund cauſed a ſtately coffin to be made for the remains of the

the unfortunate pair. The two priests obtained leave to look in the coffin buried in the church, and found nothing but stones and earth in it. The commissioners then declared they were fully satisfied of the reality of Edmund's pretensions.

The two priests were employed in drawing up a circumstantial account of these discoveries, in order to make their report to the Barons at their return. In the mean time Mr. William took an opportunity to introduce Edmund to his sister.—My Emma, said he, the heir of Lovel is desirous to pay his respects to you. They were both in apparent confusion; but Edmund's wore off, and Emma's increased.—I have been long desirous, said he, to pay my respects to the Lady whom I most honour, but unavoidable duties have detained me; when these are fully paid, it is my wish to devote the remainder of my life to Lady Emma!—Are you, then, the heir of Lovel?—I am, Madam; and am also the man in whose behalf I once presumed to speak.—'Tis very strange indeed!—It is so, Madam, to myself; but time, that reconciles us to all things, will, I hope, render this change in my situation familiar to you. William said,

—You

—You are both well acquainted with the wishes of my heart; but my advice is, that you do not encourage a farther intimacy till my Lord's determination be fully known.—You may dispose of me as you please, said Edmund; but I cannot help declaring my wishes; yet I will submit to my Lord's sentence, though he should doom me to despair.

From this period, the young pair behaved with solemn respect to each other, but with apparent reserve. The young Lady sometimes appeared in company, but oftener chose to be in her own apartment, where she began to believe and hope for the completion of her wishes. The uncertainty of the Baron's determination, threw an air of anxiety over Edmund's face: His friend William, by the most tender care and attention, strove to dispel his fears, and encourage his hopes; but he waited with impatience for the return of the commissioners, and the decision of his fate.

While these things passed at the Castle of Lovel, the nominal Baron recovered his health and strength at the house of Lord Clifford: In the same proportion he grew more and more shy and reserved, avoided the company of his brother

brother and nephew, and was frequently shut up with his two servants. Sir Robert Fitz-Owen made several attempts to gain his confidence, but in vain; he was equally shy to him as the rest. M. Zadisky observed his motions with the penetration for which his countrymen have been distinguished in all ages: He communicated his suspicions to Sir Philip and the Barons, giving it as his opinion, that the criminal was meditating an escape. They asked, what he thought was to be done? Zadisky offered to watch him in turn with another person, and to lie in wait for him; he also proposed, that horses should be kept in readiness, and men to mount them, without knowledge of the service they were to be employed in. The Barons agreed to leave the whole management of this affair to Zadisky. He took his measures so well, that he intercepted the three fugitives in the fields adjoining to the house, and brought them all back prisoners. They confined them separately, while the Lords and Gentlemen consulted how to dispose of them.

Sir Philip applied to Lord Fitz-Owen, who begged leave to be silent: I have nothing, said he, to offer in favour of this bad man; and I

cannot propoſe harſher meaſures with ſo near a relation. Zadiſky then begged to be heard. You can no longer have any reliance upon the word of a man who has forfeited all pretenſions to honour and ſincerity. I have long wiſhed to reviſit once more my native country, and to inquire after ſome very dear friends I left there; I will undertake to convey this man to a very diſtant part of the world, where it will be out of his power to do further miſchief, and free his relations from an ungrateful charge, unleſs you ſhould rather chuſe to bring him to puniſhment here. Lord Clifford approved of the propoſal; Lord Fitz-Owen remained ſilent, but ſhewed no marks of diſapprobation.

Sir Philip objected to parting with his friend; but Zadiſky aſſured him he had particular reaſons for returning to the Holy Land, of which he ſhould be judge hereafter. Sir Philip deſired the Lord Fitz-Owen to give him his company to the criminal's apartment, ſaying, we will have one more converſation with him, and that ſhall decide his fate. They found him ſilent and ſullen, and he refuſed to anſwer their queſtions.—Sir Philip then beſpoke him—After the proofs you have

given

given of your falsehood and insincerity, we can no longer have any reliance upon you, nor faith in your fulfilling the conditions of our agreement; I will, therefore, once more make you a proposal that shall still leave you indebted to our clemency. You shall banish yourself from England for ever, and go in pilgrimage to the Holy Land, with such companions as we shall appoint; or, secondly, you shall enter directly into a monastery, and there be shut up for life; or, thirdly, if you refuse both these offers, I will go directly to Court, throw myself at the feet of my Sovereign, relate the whole story of your wicked life and actions, and demand vengeance on your head. The King is too good and pious to let such villany go unpunished; he will bring you to public shame and punishment: And be you assured, if I begin this prosecution, I will pursue it to the utmost. I appeal to your worthy brother for the justice of my proceeding. I reason no more with you, I only declare my resolution. I wait your answer one hour, and the next I put in execution whatever you shall oblige me to determine. So saying, they retired, and left him to reflect and to resolve. At the expi-

ration of the hour they ſent Zadiſky to receive his anſwer; he inſinuated to him the generoſity and charity of Sir Philip and the Lords, and the certainty of their reſolutions, and begged him to take care what anſwer he returned, for that his fate depended on it. He kept ſilent ſeveral minutes, reſentment and deſpair were painted on his viſage; at length he ſpoke:

Tell my proud enemies that I prefer baniſhment to death, infamy, or a life of ſolitude.—You have choſen well, ſaid Zadiſky. To a wiſe man all countries are alike; it ſhall be my care to make mine agreeable to you.—Are you then the perſon choſen for my companion?—I am, Sir; and you may judge by that circumſtance, that thoſe whom you call your enemies, are not ſo in effect. Farewell, Sir; I go to prepare for our departure.

Zadiſky went and made his report, and then ſet immediately about his preparations. He choſe two active young men for his attendants; and gave them directions to keep a ſtrict eye upon their charge, for that they ſhould be accountable if he ſhould eſcape them.

In the mean time the Baron Fitz-Owen had several conferences with his brother: he endeavoured to make him sensible of his crimes, and of the justice and clemency of his Conqueror; but he was moody and reserved to him as to the rest. Sir Philip Harclay obliged him to surrender his worldly estates into the hands of Lord Fitz-Owen: A writing was drawn up for that purpose, and executed in the presence of them all. Lord Fitz-Owen engaged to allow him an annual sum, and to advance money for the expences of his voyage. He spoke to him in the most affectionate manner, but he refused his embrace:—You will have nothing to regret, said he, haughtily; for the gain is yours. Sir Philip conjured Zadisky to return to him again; who answered,—I will either return, or give such reasons for my stay, as you shall approve. I will send a messenger to acquaint you with my arrival in Syria, and with such other particulars as I shall judge interesting to you and yours. In the mean time remember me in your prayers, and preserve for me those sentiments of friendship and esteem, that I have always deemed one of the chief honours and blessings of my life.—Commend

my love and duty to your adopted ſon; he will more than ſupply my abſence, and be the comfort of your old age. Adieu, beſt and nobleſt of friends!—They took a tender leave of each other, not without tears on both ſides.

The travellers ſet out directly for a diſtant ſeaport, where they heard of a ſhip bound for the Levant, in which they embarked and proceeded on their voyage.

The Commiſſioners arrived at Lord Clifford's a few days after the departure of the adventurers. They gave a minute account of their commiſſion, and expreſſed themſelves entirely ſatisfied of the juſtice of Edmund's pretenſions; they gave an account in writing of all that they had been eye-witneſſes to, and ventured to urge the Baron Fitz-Owen on the ſubject of Edmund's wiſhes. The Baron was already diſpoſed in his favour; his mind was employed in the future eſtabliſhment of his family. During their reſidence at Lord Clifford's, his eldeſt ſon Sir Robert had caſt his eye upon the eldeſt daughter of that nobleman, and he beſought his father to aſk her in marriage for him. The Baron was pleaſed with the alliance, and took the firſt opportu-

nity

nity to mention it to Lord Clifford; who anſwered him, pleaſantly,—I will give my daughter to your ſon, upon condition that you will give yours to the heir of Lovel. The Baron looked ſerious: Lord Clifford went on —I like that young man ſo well, that I would accept him for a ſon-in-law, if he aſked me for my daughter; and if I have any influence with you, I will uſe it in his behalf.—A powerful ſolicitor indeed! ſaid the Baron; but you know my eldeſt ſon's reluctance to it; if he conſents, ſo will I.—He ſhall conſent, ſaid Lord Clifford, or he ſhall have no daughter of mine. Let him ſubdue his prejudices, and then I will lay aſide my ſcruples. —But, my Lord, replied the Baron, if I can obtain his free conſent, it will be the beſt for all: I will try once more, and if he will not, I will leave it wholly to your management.

When the noble company were all aſſembled, Sir Philip Harclay revived the ſubject, and beſought the Lord Fitz-Owen to put an end to the work he had begun, by confirming Edmund's happineſs. The Baron roſe up, and thus ſpoke:—The proofs of Edmund's noble birth, the ſtill ſtronger ones of his excellent endowments and qualities, the

 ſolicitations

solicitations of so many noble friends in his behalf, have altogether determined me in his favour; and I hope to do justice to his merit, without detriment to my other children: I am resolved to make them all as happy as my power will allow me to do. Lord Clifford has been so gracious to promise his fair daughter to my son Robert, upon certain conditions, that I will take upon me to ratify, and which will render my son worthy of the happiness that awaits him. My children are the undoubted heirs of my unhappy brother, Lovel; you, my son, shall therefore immediately take possession of your Uncle's house and estate, only obliging you to pay to each of your younger brothers the sum of one thousand pounds; on this condition, I will secure that estate to you and your heirs for ever. I will, by my own act and deed surrender the Castle and estate of Lovel to the right owner, and at the same time marry him to my daughter. I will settle a proper allowance upon my two younger sons, and dispose of what remains by a will and testament; and then I shall have done all my business in this world, and shall have nothing to do but prepare for the next.

Oh,

Oh, my father! said Sir Robert, I cannot bear your generosity; you would give away all to others, and reserve nothing for yourself. —Not so, my son, said the Baron: I will repair my old castle in Wales, and reside there. I will visit my children, and be visited by them: I will enjoy their happiness, and by that means increase my own; whether I look backwards or forwards, I shall have nothing to do but rejoice, and be thankful to Heaven that has given me so many blessings; I shall have the comfortable reflection of having discharged my duties as a citizen, a husband, a father, a friend; and, whenever I am summoned away from this world, I shall die content.

Sir Robert came forward with tears on his cheeks; he kneeled to his father—Best of parents, and of men! said he; you have subdued a heart that has been too refractory to your will: you have this day made me sensible how much I owe to your goodness and forbearance with me. Forgive me all that is past, and from henceforward dispose of me; I will have no will but yours, no ambition but to be worthy of the name of your son.— And this day, said the Baron, do I enjoy the

true happineſs of a father! Riſe, my ſon, and take poſſeſſion of the firſt place in my affection without reſerve. They embraced with tears on both ſides: The company roſe, and congratulated both father and ſon. The Baron preſented his ſon to Lord Clifford, who embraced him, and ſaid,—You ſhall have my daughter, for I ſee that you deſerve her.

Sir Philip Harclay approached; the Baron gave his ſon's hand to the Knight:—Love and reſpect that good man, ſaid he; deſerve his friendſhip, and you will obtain it. Nothing but congratulations were heard on all ſides.

When the joy was in ſome degree reduced to compoſure, Sir Philip propoſed that they ſhould begin to execute the ſchemes of happineſs they had planned. He propoſed that my Lord Fitz-Owen ſhould go with him to the Caſtle of Lovel, and ſettle the family there. The Baron conſented; and both together invited ſuch of the company, as liked it, to accompany them thither. It was agreed that a nephew of Lord Graham's, another of Lord Clifford's, two gentlemen, friends of Sir Philip Harclay, and father Oſwald, ſhould be of the party; together with ſeveral of Sir

Philip's

Philip's dependants and domeſtics, and the attendants on the reſt. Lord Fitz-Owen gave orders for their ſpeedy departure. Lord Graham and his friends took leave of them, in order to return to his own home; but, before he went, he engaged his eldeſt nephew and heir to the ſecond daughter of the Lord Clifford: Sir Robert offered himſelf to the eldeſt, who modeſtly received his addreſs, and made no objection to his propoſal. The fathers confirmed their engagement.

Lord Fitz-Owen promiſed to return to the celebration of the marriage; in the mean time he ordered his ſon to go and take poſſeſſion of his Uncle's houſe, and to ſettle his houſehold: He invited young Clifford, and ſome other gentlemen, to go with him. The company ſeparated with regret, and with many promiſes of friendſhip on all ſides; and the gentlemen of the North were to cultivate the good neighbourhood on both ſides of the borders.

Sir Philip Harclay and the Baron Fitz-Owen, with their friends and attendants, ſet forwards for the Caſtle of Lovel; a ſervant went before, at full ſpeed, to acquaint the family of their approach. Edmund was in

great anxiety of mind, now the crisis of his fate was near at hand: He inquired of the messenger, who were of the party? and finding that Sir Philip Harclay was there, and that Sir Robert Fitz-Owen staid in the North, his hopes rose above his fears. Mr. William, attended by a servant, rode forward to meet them; he desired Edmund to stay and receive them. Edmund was under some difficulty with regard to his behaviour to the lovely Emma; a thousand times his heart rose to his lips, as often he suppressed his emotions; they both sighed frequently, said little, thought much, and wished for the event. Master Walter was too young to partake of their anxieties, but he wished for the arrival of his father to end them.

Mr. William's impatience spurred him on to meet his father; as soon as he saw him, he rode up directly to him: My dear father, you are welcome home! said he.—I think not, Sir, said the Baron, and looked serious.——Why so, my Lord? said William.—Because it is no longer mine, but another man's home, answered he, and I must receive my welcome from him.—Meaning Edmund? said William.—Whom else can it be?—Ah, my

Lord! he is your creature, your ſervant; he puts his fate into your hands, and will ſubmit to your pleaſure in all things!—Why comes he not to meet us? ſaid the Baron.—His fears prevent him, ſaid William; but ſpeak the word, and I will fetch him.—No, ſaid the Baron, we will wait on him.—William looked confuſed: Is Edmund ſo unfortunate, ſaid he, as to have incurred your diſpleaſure? Sir Philip Harclay advanced, and laid his hand on William's ſaddle.—Generous impatience! noble youth! ſaid he; look round you, and ſee if you can diſcover in this company one enemy of your friend! Leave to your excellent father the time and manner of explaining himſelf; he only can do juſtice to his own ſentiments. The Baron ſmiled on Sir Philip; William's countenance cleared up; they went forward, and ſoon arrived at the Caſtle of Lovel.

Edmund was walking to and fro in the hall, when he heard the horn that announced their arrival; his emotions were ſo great that he could hardly ſupport them. The Baron and Sir Philip entered the hall hand in hand; Edmund threw himſelf at their feet, and embraced their knees, but could not utter a word.

They

They raiſed him between them, and ſtrove to encourage him: but he threw himſelf into the arms of Sir Philip Harclay, deprived of ſtrength, and almoſt of life. They ſupported him to a ſeat, where he recovered by degrees, but had no power to ſpeak his feelings; he looked up to his benefactors in the moſt affecting manner, he laid his hand upon his boſom, but was ſtill ſilent. Compoſe yourſelf, my dear ſon, ſaid Sir Philip; you are in the arms of your beſt friends. Look up to the happineſs that awaits you; enjoy the bleſſings that Heaven ſends you; lift up your heart in gratitude to the Creator, and think leſs of what you owe to the creature! You will have time enough to pay us your acknowledgments hereafter.

The company came round them, the ſervants flocked into the hall, ſhouts of joy were heard on all ſides; the Baron came and took Edmund's hand: Riſe, Sir, ſaid he, and do the honours of your houſe! it is yours from this day: We are your gueſts, and expect from you our welcome! Edmund kneeled to the Baron, he ſpoke with a faultering voice— My Lord, I am yours! all that I have is at your devotion! diſpoſe of me as it pleaſes you

beſt.

best. The Baron embraced him with the greatest affection: Look round you, said he, and salute your friends; these gentlemen came hither to do you honour. Edmund revived, he embraced and welcomed the gentlemen. Father Oswald received his embrace with peculiar affection, and gave him his benediction in a most affecting manner. Edmund exclaimed—Pray for me, father! that I may bear all these blessings with gratitude and moderation! He then saluted and shook hands with all the servants, not omitting the meanest; he distinguished Joseph by a cordial embrace, he called him his dear friend: Now, said he, I can return your friendship, and I am proud to acknowledge it! The old man, with a faultering voice, cried out—Now I have lived long enough! I have seen my master's son acknowledged for the heir of Lovel! the hall echoed with his words: Long live the heir of Lovel!

The Baron took Edmund's hands in his own: Let us retire from this crowd, said he; we have business of a more private nature to transact. He led to the parlour, followed by Sir Philip and the other gentlemen. Where are my other children? said he. William

retired,

retired, and presently returned with his brother and sister. They kneeled to their father, who raised and embraced them.—He then called out, William!—Edmund!—come and receive my blessing also. They approached hand in hand, they kneeled, and he gave them a solemn benediction.—Your friendship deserves our praise, my children! love each other always! and may Heaven pour down its choicest blessings upon your heads! They rose, and embraced in silent raptures of joy. Edmund presented his friend to Sir Philip: I understand you, said he; this Gentleman was my first acquaintance of this family; he has a title to the second place in my heart: I shall tell him, at more leisure, how much I love and honour him, for his own sake as well as yours. He embraced the youth, and desired his friendship.

Come hither, my Emma! said the Baron. She approached, with tears on her cheek, sweetly blushing, like the damask rose, wet with the dew of the morning. I must ask you a serious question, my child; answer me with the same sincerity you would to Heaven. You see this young man, the Heir of Lovel! You have known him long; consult your own heart,

heart, and tell me whether you have any objection to receive him for your husband. I have promised to all this company to give you to him; but upon condition that you approve him: I think him worthy of you; and, whether you accept him or not, he shall ever be to me a son; but Heaven forbid that I should compel my child to give her hand where she cannot bestow her heart! Speak freely, and decide this point for me and for yourself. The fair Emma blushed, and was under some confusion; her virgin modesty prevented her speaking for some moments. Edmund trembled; he leaned upon William's shoulder to support himself. Emma cast her eye upon him, she saw his emotion, and hastened to relieve him; she thus spoke, in a soft voice which gathered strength as she proceeded—My Lord and father's goodness has always prevented my wishes; I am the happiest of all children, in being able to obey his commands, without offering violence to my own inclinations: As I am called upon in this public manner, it is but justice to this gentleman's merit to declare, that, were I at liberty to chuse a husband from all the world, he only should be my choice, who, I can say,

with

with joy, is my father's alſo. Edmund bowed low, he advanced towards her; the Baron took his daughter's hand, and preſented it to him; he kneeled upon one knee, he took her hand, kiſſed it, and preſſed it to his boſom: The Baron embraced and bleſſed them; he preſented them to Sir Philip Harclay—Receive and acknowledge your children! ſaid he.—I do receive them as the gift of Heaven! ſaid the noble Knight; they are as much mine as if I had begotten them: All that I have is theirs, and ſhall deſcend to their children for ever. A freſh ſcene of congratulation enſued; and the hearts of all the auditors were too much engaged to be able ſoon to return to the eaſe and tranquillity of common life.

After they had refreſhed themſelves, and recovered from the emotions they had ſuſtained on this intereſting occaſion, Edmund thus addreſſed the Baron:—On the brink of happineſs I muſt claim your attention to a melancholy ſubject. The bones of both my parents lie unburied in this houſe; permit me, my honoured Lord, to perform my laſt duties to them, and the remainder of my life ſhall be devoted to you and yours.—Certainly, ſaid

the Baron? why have you not interred them? —My Lord, I waited for your arrival, that you might be certified of the reality, and that no doubts might remain.—I have no doubts, ſaid the Baron: Alas! both the crime and puniſhment of the offender leave no room for them!—He ſighed.—Let us now put an end to this affair; and, if poſſible, forget it for ever.

If it will not be too painful to you, my Lord, I would entreat you, with theſe gentlemen our friends, to follow me into the eaſt apartment, the ſcene of my parents woes, and yet the dawning of my better hopes.

They roſe to attend him; he committed the Lady Emma to the care of her youngeſt brother, obſerving that the ſcene was too ſolemn for a Lady to be preſent at it. They proceeded to the apartment; he ſhewed the Baron the fatal cloſet, and the place where the bones were found, alſo the trunk that contained them; he recapitulated all that paſſed before their arrival; he ſhewed them the coffin where the bones of the unfortunate pair were depoſited: He then deſired the Baron to give orders for their interment. No, replied he, it belongs to you to order, and every one

here

here is ready to perform it. Edmund then desired father Oswald to give notice to the Friars of the Monastery of St. Austin, that, with their permission, the funeral should be solemnized there, and the bones interred in the church. He also gave orders that the closet should be floored, the apartment repaired, and put in order. He then returned to the other side of the Castle.

Preparations being made for the funeral, it was performed a few days after. Edmund attended in person as chief mourner, Sir Philip Harclay as the second; Joseph desired he might assist as servant to the deceased: They were followed by most people of the village. The story was now become public, and every one blessed Edmund for the piety and devotion with which he performed the last duties to his parents.—Edmund appeared in deep mourning; the week after, he assisted at a mass for the repose of the deceased.

Sir Philip Harclay ordered a monument to be erected to the memory of his friends, with the following inscription:

"Praye for the soules of Arthur Lord
"Lovele and Marie his wife, who were cut
"off in the flowere of theire youthe, by the

"trecherye

"trecherye and crueltie of theire neare "kinnesmanne. Edmunde theire onlie sonne, "one and twentie yeares after theire deathe, "by the direction of Heavene, made the dis- "coverye of the mannere of theire deathe, "and at the same time proved his own birthe. "He collected theire bones together, and in- "terred them in this place:—A warning "and proofe to late posteritie, of the jus- "tice of Providence, and the certaintie of "Retribution."

The Sunday after the funeral, Edmund threw off his mourning, and appeared in a dress suitable to his condition. He received the compliments of his friends with ease and cheerfulness, and began to enjoy his happiness. He asked an audience of his fair Mistress, and was permitted to declare the passion he had so long stifled in his own bosom. She gave him a favourable hearing, and in a short time confessed that she had suffered equally in that suspence that was so grievous to him. They engaged themselves by mutual vows to each other, and only waited the Baron's pleasure to complete their happiness; every cloud was vanished from their brows, and sweet tranquillity took possession of their

 bosoms.

bosoms. Their friends shared their happiness; William and Edmund renewed their vows of everlasting friendship, and promised to be as much together as William's other duties would permit.

The Baron once more summoned all his company together; he told Edmund all that had passed relating to his brother-in-law, his exile, and the pilgrimage of Zadisky; he then related the circumstances of Sir Robert's engagement to Lord Clifford's daughter, his establishment in his Uncle's seat, and his own obligations to return time enough to be present at the marriage: But before I go, said he, I will give my daughter to the heir of Lovel, and then I shall have discharged my duty to him, and my promise to Sir Philip Harclay.

You have nobly performed both, said Sir Philip, and whenever you depart I shall be your companion.—What, said Edmund, am I to be deprived of both my fathers at once? My honoured Lord, you have given away two houses, where do you intend to reside?—No matter, said the Baron; I know I shall be welcome to both.—My dear lord, said Edmund, stay here and be still the Master; I shall be proud to be under your command,

and to be your ſervant as well as your ſon!—No, Edmund, ſaid the Baron, that would not now be proper; this is your Caſtle, you are its Lord and Maſter, and it is incumbent on you to ſhew yourſelf worthy of the great things Providence hath done for you.—How ſhall I, a young man, acquit myſelf of ſo many duties as will be upon me, without the advice and aſſiſtance of my two paternal friends? Oh, Sir Philip! will you too leave me? once you gave me hopes—he ſtopped, greatly affected. Sir Philip ſaid, Tell me truly, Edmund, do you really deſire that I ſhould live with you?—As truly, Sir, as I deſire life and happineſs!——Then, my dear child, I will live and die with you! They embraced with tears of affection, and Edmund was all joy and gratitude. My good Lord, ſaid Sir Philip, you have diſpoſed of two houſes, and have none ready to receive you; will you accept of mine? it is much at your ſervice, and its being in the ſame county with your eldeſt ſon, will be an inducement to you to reſide there. The Baron caught Sir Philip's hand—Noble Sir, I thank you, and I will embrace your kind offer; I will be your tenant for the preſent; my caſtle

in Wales shall be put in repair, in the mean time; if I do not reside there, it will be an establishment for one of my younger sons: But what will you do with your old soldiers and dependants?—My Lord, I will never cast them off. There is another house on my estate that has been shut up many years; I will have it repaired and furnished properly for the reception of my old men: I will endow it with a certain sum to be paid annually, and will appoint a steward to manage their revenue; I will continue it during the lives of the first inhabitants, and after that I shall leave it to my son here, to do as he pleases.—Your son, said Edmund, will make it the business of his life to act worthy of such a father.—Enough, said Sir Philip, I am satisfied that you will. I purpose to reside myself in that very apartment which my dear friend your father inhabited; I will tread in his footsteps, and think he sees me acting his part in his son's family. I will be attended by my own servants; and, whenever you desire it, I will give you my company; your joys, your griefs shall be mine, I shall hold your children in my arms, and their prattle shall amuse my old age: And, as my last earthly wish, your

hands

hands ſhall cloſe my eyes.—Long, very long, ſaid Edmund (with eyes and hands lifted up) may it be ere I perform ſo ſad a duty!—Long and happily may you live together, ſaid the Baron! I will hope to ſee you ſome times, and to claim a ſhare in your bleſſings. But let us give no more tears to ſorrow, the reſt ſhall be thoſe of joy and tranſport. The firſt ſtep we take ſhall be to marry our Edmund; I will give orders for the celebration, and they ſhall be the laſt orders I ſhall give in this houſe. They then ſeparated, and went to prepare for the approaching ſolemnity.

Sir Philip and the Baron had a private conference concerning Edmund's aſſuming the name and title of Lovel. I am reſolved, ſaid Sir Philip, to go to the King; to acquaint him briefly with Edmund's hiſtory; I will requeſt that he may be called up to parliament by a writ, for there is no need of a new patent, he being the true inheritor; in the mean time he ſhall aſſume the name, arms, and title, and I will anſwer any one that ſhall diſpute his right to them. Sir Philip then declared his reſolution to ſet out with the Baron at his departure, and to ſettle all his other affairs be-

fore he returned to take up his residence at the Castle.

A few days after, the marriage was celebrated, to the entire satisfaction of all parties. The Baron ordered the doors to be thrown open, and the house free for all comers; with every other token of joy and festivity. Edmund appeared full of joy without levity, of mirth without extravagance; he received the congratulations of his friends, with ease, freedom, and vivacity. He sent for his foster father and mother, who began to think themselves neglected, as he had been so deeply engaged in affairs of more consequence, that he had not been particularly attentive to them; he made them come into the great hall, and presented them to his Lady.

These, said he, are the good people to whom I am, under God, indebted for my present happiness; they were my first benefactors; I was obliged to them for food and sustenance in my childhood, and this good woman nourished my infancy at her own breast. The lady received them graciously, and saluted Margery. Andrew kneeled down, and, with great humility, begged Edmund's pardon for his treatment of him in his child-

hood.

hood. I heartily forgive you, ſaid he, and I will excuſe you to yourſelf; it was natural for you to look upon me as an intruder, that was eating your children's bread; you ſaved my life, and afterwards you ſuſtained it by your food and raiment: I ought to have maintained myſelf, and to have contributed to your maintenance. But, beſides this, your treatment of me was the firſt of my preferment; it recommended me to the notice of this noble family: Every thing that happened to me ſince, has been a ſtep to my preſent ſtate of honour and happineſs. Never man had ſo many benefactors as myſelf; but both they, and myſelf, have been only inſtruments in the hands of Providence, to bring about its own purpoſes: Let us praiſe God for all! I ſhared your poverty, and you will ſhare my riches; I will give you the cottage where you dwell, and the ground about it; I will alſo pay you the annual ſum of ten pounds for the lives of you both; I will put out your children to manual trades, and aſſiſt you to provide for them in their own ſtation; and you are to look upon this as paying a debt, and not beſtowing a gift: I owe you more than I can ever pay: and, if there be any thing fur-

ther in my power that will contribute to your happiness, you can ask nothing in reason that I will deny you.

Andrew hid his face: I cannot bear it! said he: Oh what a brute was I, to abuse such a child as this! I shall never forgive myself! —You must indeed, my friend, for I forgive and thank you. Andrew retired back, but Margery came forward; she looked earnestly on Edmund, she then threw her arms about his neck, and wept aloud—My precious child! my lovely babe! thank God, I have lived to see this day! I will rejoice in your good fortune, and your bounty to us, but I must ask one more favour yet; that I may sometimes come hither and behold that gracious countenance, and thank God that I was honoured so far as to give thee food from my own breast, and to bring thee up to be a blessing to me, and to all that know thee! Edmund was affected, he returned her embrace; he bade her come to the Castle as often as she pleased, and she should always be received as his mother; the bride saluted her, and told her the oftener she came, the more welcome she should be. Margery and her husband retired,

full

full of blessings and prayers for their happiness; she gave vent to her joy, by relating to the servants and neighbours every circumstance of Edmund's birth, infancy, and childhood: Many a tear was dropped by the auditors, and many a prayer wafted to Heaven for his happiness. Joseph took up the story where she left it; he told the rising dawn of youth and virtue, darting its ray through the clouds of obscurity, and how every stroke of envy and malignity brushed away some part of the darkness that veiled its lustre: He told the story of the haunted apartment, and all the consequences of it; how he and Oswald conveyed the youth away from the Castle, no more to return till he came as master of it: He closed the tale with praise to Heaven for the happy discovery, that gave such an heir to the house of Lovel; to his dependants such a Lord and Master; to mankind a friend and benefactor. There was truly a house of joy; not that false kind, in the midst of which there is heaviness, but that of rational creatures, grateful to the supreme Benefactor, raising their minds, by a due enjoyment of earthly blessings, to a preparation for a more perfect state hereafter.

A few days after the wedding, the Lord Fitz-Owen began to prepare for his journey to the north. He gave to Edmund the plate, linen, and furniture of the Castle, the farming stock and utensils; he would have added a sum of money, but Sir Philip stopped his hand:—We do not forget, said he, that you have other children, we will not suffer you to injure them; give us your blessing and paternal affection, and we have nothing more to ask:—I told you, my Lord, that you and I should one day be sincere friends.—We must be so, answered the Baron; it is impossible to be long your enemy: We are brothers, and shall be to our lives end.

They regulated the young man's household; the Baron gave leave to the servants to choose their master; the elder ones followed him (except Joseph, who desired to live with Edmund, as the chief happiness of his life); most of the younger ones chose the service of the youthful pair. There was a tender and affectionate parting on all sides. Edmund besought his beloved William not to leave him. The Baron said, he must insist on his being at his brother's wedding, as a due attention

tention to him; but after that he should return to the Castle for some time.

The Baron and Sir Philip Harclay, with their train, set forward. Sir Philip went to London and obtained all he desired for his Edmund; from thence he went into Yorkshire, and settled his affairs there, removing his pensioners to his other house, and putting Lord Fitz-Owen in possession of his own. They had a generous contention about the terms; but Sir Philip insisted on the Baron's accepting the use of every thing there: You hold it in trust for a future grandchild, said he, whom I hope to live to endow with it.

During Sir Philip's absence, the young Lord Lovel caused the haunted apartment to be repaired and furnished for the reception of his father by adoption. He placed his friend Joseph over all his men servants, and ordered him to forbear his attendance; but the old man would always stand at the side-board, and feast his eyes with the countenance of his own Master's son, surrounded with honour and happiness. John Wyatt waited upon the person of his Lord, and enjoyed his favour without abatement. Mr. William Fitz-Owen accompanied Sir Philip Harclay from

the north country, when he returned to take up his residence at the Castle of Lovel.

Edmund, in the arms of love and friendship, enjoyed with true relish the blessings that surrounded him, with an heart overflowing with benevolence to his fellow-creatures, and raptures of gratitude to his Creator. His Lady and himself were examples of conjugal affection and happiness. Within a year from his marriage she brought him a son and heir, whose birth renewed the joy and congratulations of all his friends: The Baron Fitz-Owen came to the baptism, and partook of his children's blessings. The child was called Arthur, after the name of his grandfather.

The year following was born a second son, who was called Philip Harclay; upon him the noble Knight of that name settled his estate in Yorkshire; and by the King's permission, he took the name and arms of that family.

The third son was called William; he inherited the fortune of his uncle of that name, who adopted him, and he made the Castle of Lovel his residence, and died a bachelor.

The fourth son was called Edmund; the fifth Owen; and there was also a daughter called Emma.

When

When time had worn out the prejudices of Sir Robert Fitz-Owen, the good old Baron of that name propoſed a marriage between his eldeſt ſon and heir, and the daughter of Edmund Lord Lovel, which was happily concluded. The nuptials were honoured with the preſence of both families; and the Old Baron was ſo elevated with this happy union of his deſcendants, that he cried out—Now I am ready to die! I have lived long enough! this is the band of love that unites all my children to me, and to each other! He did not long ſurvive this happy event; he died full of years and honours, and his name was never mentioned but with the deepeſt marks of gratitude, love, and veneration. Sweet is the remembrance of the virtuous, and happy are the deſcendants of ſuch a father! they will think on him, and emulate his virtues; they will remember him, and be aſhamed to degenerate from their anceſtor.

Many years after Sir Philip Harclay ſettled at the Caſtle, he received tidings from his friend Zadiſky, by one of the two ſervants who attended him to the Holy Land. From him he learned that his friend had diſcovered, by private advices, that he had a ſon living in

Paleſtine

Palestine, which was the chief motive of his leaving England; that he had met with various adventures in pursuit of him; that at length he found him, converted him to the Christian religion, and then persuaded him to retire from the world into a monastery by the side of mount Libanus, where he intended to end his days.

That Walter, commonly called Lord Lovel, had entered into the service of the Greek emperor, John Paleologus, not bearing to undergo a life of solitude and retirement; that he made up a story of his being compelled to leave his native country by his relations, for having accidentally killed one of them, and that he was treated with great cruelty and injustice; that he had accepted a post in the emperor's army, and was soon after married to the daughter of one of the chief officers of it.

Zadisky foresaw, and lamented the downfall of that empire, and withdrew from the storm he saw approaching. Finally, he bade the messenger tell Sir Philip Harclay and his adopted son, that he should not cease to pray for them, and desired their prayers in return.

Sir Philip desired Lord Lovel to entertain this messenger in his service. That good Knight lived to extreme old age in honour and happiness, and died in the arms of his beloved Edmund; who also performed the last duties to his faithful Joseph.

Father Oswald lived many years in the family as chaplain; he retired from thence at length, and died in his own monastery.

Edmund Lord Lovel lived to old age, in peace, honour, and happiness; and died in the arms of his children.

Sir Philip Harclay caused the papers relating to his son's history to be collected together; the first part of it was written under his own eye in Yorkshire, the subsequent parts by father Oswald at the Castle of Lovel. All these, when together, furnish a striking lesson to posterity, of the over-ruling hand of Providence, and the certainty of RETRIBUTION.

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